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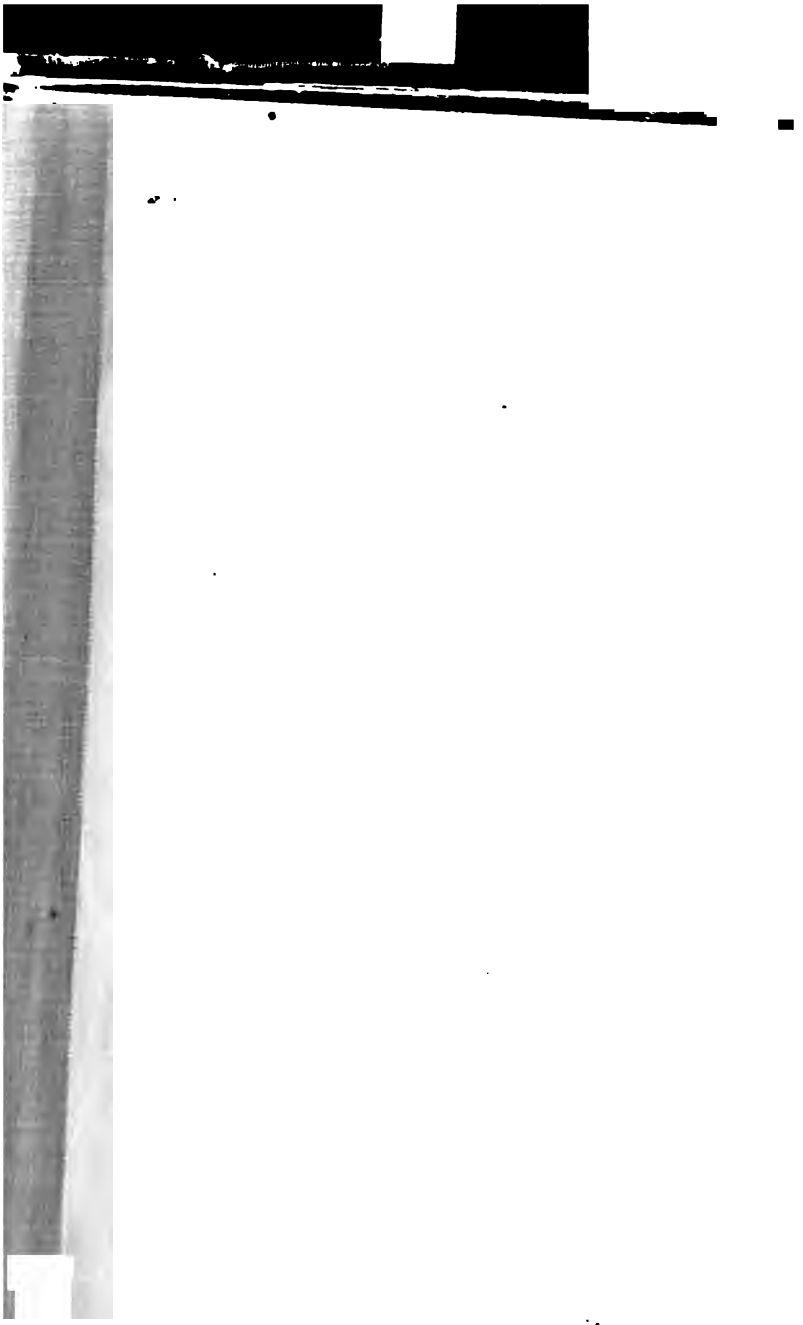
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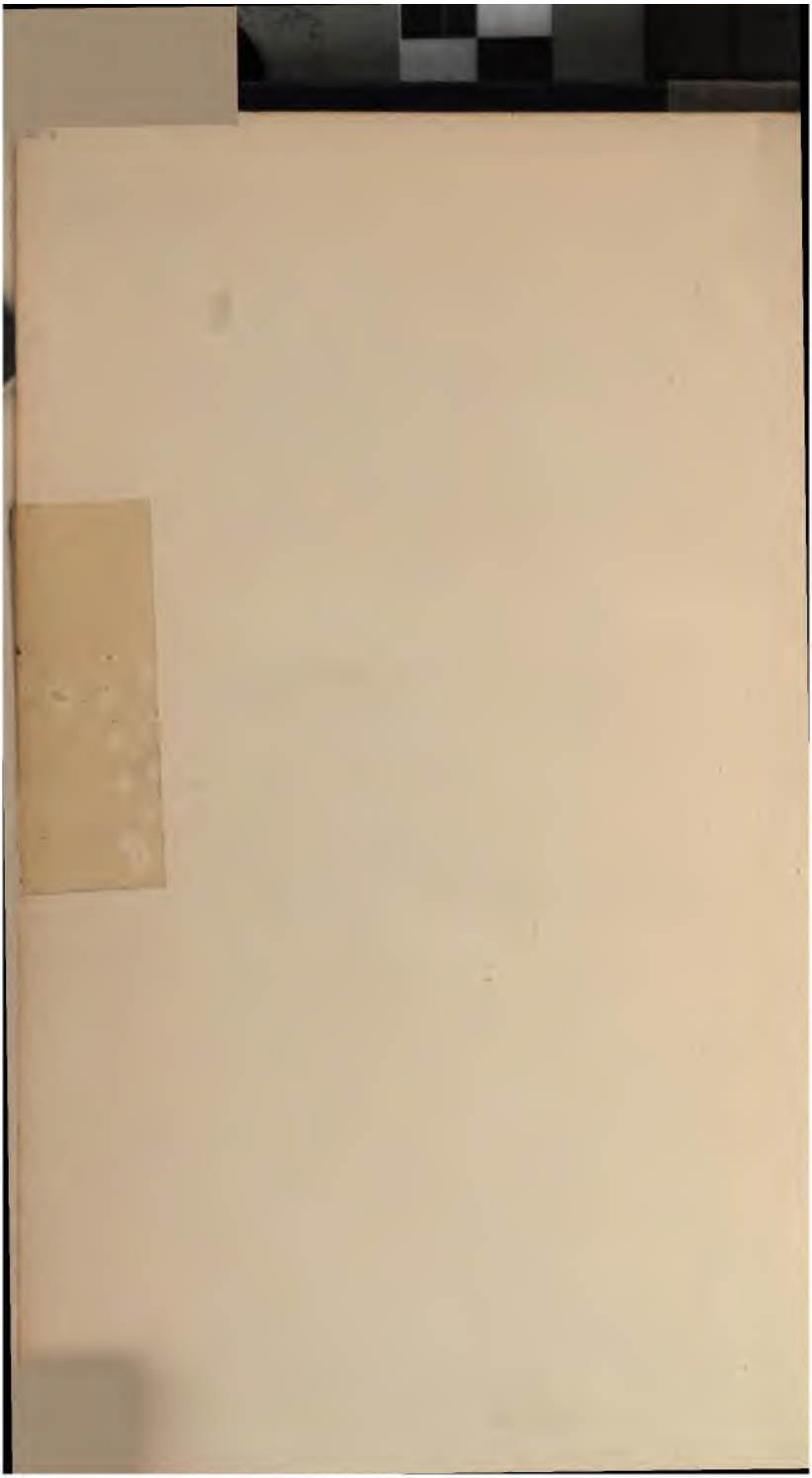




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English Men of Letters

EDITED BY JOHN MORLEY

VOL. VII

HUME

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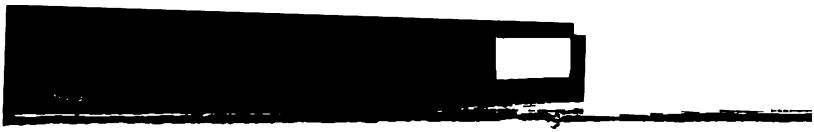
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English Men of Letters

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HUME





HUME

BY

PROFESSOR HUXLEY

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HUME



HUME.

PART I.

HUME'S LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY LIFE: LITERARY AND POLITICAL WRITINGS.

DAVID HUME was born in Edinburgh on the 26th of April (O.S.), 1711. His parents were then residing in the parish of the Tron church, apparently on a visit to the Scottish capital, as the small estate which his father Joseph Hume, or Home, inherited, lay in Berwickshire, on the banks of the Whitadder or Whitewater, a few miles from the border, and within sight of English ground. The paternal mansion was little more than a very modest farmhouse,[1] and the property derived its name

[1] A picture of the house, taken from Drummond's *History of Noble British Families*, is to be seen in Chambers's *Book of Days* (April 26th); and if, as Drummond says, "It is a favourable specimen of the best Scotch lairds' houses," all that can be said is that the worst Scotch lairds must have been poorly lodged indeed.

of Ninewells from a considerable spring, which breaks out on the slope in front of the house, and falls into the Whitadder.

Both mother and father came of good Scottish families—the paternal line running back to Lord Home of Douglas, who went over to France with the Douglas during the French wars of Henry V. and VI. and was killed at the battle of Verneuil. Joseph Hume died when David was an infant, leaving himself and two elder children, a brother and a sister, to the care of their mother, who is described by David Hume in *My Own Life* as "a woman of singular merit, who though young and handsome devoted herself entirely to the rearing and education of her children." Mr. Burton says: "Her portrait, which I have seen, represents a thin but pleasing countenance, expressive of great intellectual acuteness;" and as Hume told Dr. Black that she had "precisely the same constitution with himself" and died of the disorder which proved fatal to him, it is probable that the qualities inherited from his mother had much to do with the future philosopher's eminence. It is curious, however, that her estimate of her son in her only recorded, and perhaps slightly apocryphal utterance, is of a somewhat unexpected character. "Our Davie's a fine good-natured crater, but uncommon wake-minded." The first part of the judgment was indeed verified by "Davie's" whole life; but one might seek in vain for signs of what is commonly understood as "weakness of mind" in a man who not only showed himself to be an intellectual athlete, but who had an eminent share of practical wisdom and tenacity of purpose. One would like to know, however, when it was that Mrs. Hume committed

herself to this not too flattering judgment of her younger son. For as Hume reached the mature age of four and thirty, before he obtained any employment of sufficient importance to convert the meagre pittance of a middling laird's younger brother into a decent maintenance, it is not improbable that a shrewd Scots wife may have thought his devotion to philosophy and poverty to be due to mere infirmity of purpose. But she lived till 1749, long enough to see more than the dawn of her son's literary fame and official importance, and probably changed her mind about "Davie's" force of character.

David Hume appears to have owed little to schools or universities. There is some evidence that he entered the Greek class in the University of Edinburgh in 1723—when he was a boy of twelve years of age—but it is not known how long his studies were continued, and he did not graduate. In 1727, at any rate, he was living at Ninewells, and already possessed by that love of learning and thirst for literary fame, which, as *My Own Life* tells us, was the ruling passion of his life and the chief source of his enjoyments. A letter of this date, addressed to his friend Michael Ramsay, is certainly a most singular production for a boy of sixteen. After sundry quotations from Virgil the letter proceeds :—

"The perfectly wise man that outbraves fortune, is much greater than the husbandman who slips by her; and, indeed, this pastoral and saturnian happiness I have in a great measure come at just now. I live like a king, pretty much by myself, neither full of action nor perturbation—*molles somnos*. This state, however, I can foresee is not to be relied on. My peace of mind is not sufficiently confirmed

by philosophy to withstand the blows of fortune. This greatness and elevation of soul is to be found only in study and contemplation. This alone can teach us to look down on human accidents. You must allow [me] to talk thus like a philosopher: 'tis a subject I think much on, and could talk all day long of."

If David talked in this strain to his mother her tongue probably gave utterance to "Bless the bairn!" and, in her private soul, the epithet "wake-minded" may then have recorded itself. But, though few lonely, thoughtful, studious boys of sixteen give vent to their thoughts in such stately periods, it is probable that the brooding over an ideal is commoner at this age, than fathers and mothers, busy with the cares of practical life, are apt to imagine.

About a year later, Hume's family tried to launch him into the profession of the law; but, as he tells us, "while they fancied I was poring upon Voet and Vinnius, Cicero and Virgil were the authors which I was secretly devouring," and the attempt seems to have come to an abrupt termination. Nevertheless, as a very competent authority [1] wisely remarks:—

"There appear to have been in Hume all the elements of which a good lawyer is made: clearness of judgment, power of rapidly acquiring knowledge, untiring industry, and dialectic skill: and if his mind had not been preoccupied, he might have fallen into the gulf in which many of the world's greatest geniuses lie buried—professional eminence; and might have left behind him a reputation limited to the traditional

[1] Mr. John Hill Burton, in his valuable *Life of Hume*, on which, I need hardly say, I have drawn freely for the materials of the present biographical sketch.

recollections of the Parliament house, or associated with important decisions. He was through life an able, clear-headed man of business, and I have seen several legal documents, written in his own hand and evidently drawn by himself. They stand the test of general professional observation; and their writer, by preparing documents of facts of such a character on his own responsibility, showed that he had considerable confidence in his ability to adhere to the forms adequate for the occasion. He talked of it as 'an ancient prejudice industriously propagated by the dunces in all countries, that *a man of genius is unfit for business*,' and he showed, in his general conduct through life, that he did not choose to come voluntarily under this proscription."

Six years longer Hume remained at Ninewells before he made another attempt to embark in a practical career—this time commerce—and with a like result. For a few months' trial proved that kind of life, also, to be hopelessly against the grain.

It was while in London, on his way to Bristol, where he proposed to commence his mercantile life, that Hume addressed to some eminent London physician (probably, as Mr. Burton suggests, Dr. George Cheyne) a remarkable letter. Whether it was ever sent seems doubtful; but it shows that philosophers as well as poets have their Werterian crises, and it presents an interesting parallel to John Stuart Mill's record of the corresponding period of his youth. The letter is too long to be given in full, but a few quotations may suffice to indicate its importance to those who desire to comprehend the man.

"You must know then that from my earliest infancy I found always a strong inclination to books and letters. As our college education in Scotland, extending little further

than the languages, ends commonly when we are about fourteen or fifteen years of age, I was after that left to my own choice in my reading, and found it incline me almost equally to books of reasoning and philosophy, and to poetry and the polite authors. Every one who is acquainted either with the philosophers or critics, knows that there is nothing yet established in either of these two sciences, and that they contain little more than endless disputes, even in the most fundamental articles. Upon examination of these, I found a certain boldness of temper growing on me, which was no inclined to submit to any authority in these subjects, but led me to seek out some new medium, by which truth might be established. After much study and reflection on this, at last when I was about eighteen years of age, there seemed to be opened up to me a new scene of thought, which transported me beyond measure, and made me, with an ardour natural to young men, throw up every other pleasure or business to apply entirely to it. The law, which was the business I designed to follow, appeared nauseous to me, and I could think of no other way of pushing my fortune in the world, but that of a scholar and philosopher. I was infinitely happy in this course of life for some months; till at last, about the beginning of September, 1729, all my ardour seemed in a moment to be extinguished, and I could no longer raise my mind to that pitch, which formerly gave me such excessive pleasure."

This "decline of soul" Hume attributes, in part, to his being smitten with the beautiful representation of virtue in the works of Cicero, Seneca, and Plutarch, and being thereby led to discipline his temper and his will along with his reason and understanding.

"I was continually fortifying myself with reflections against death, and poverty, and shame, and pain, and all the other calamities of life."

And he adds very characteristically :—

"These no doubt are exceeding useful when joined with an active life, because the occasion being presented along with the reflection, works it into the soul, and makes it take a deep impression: but, in solitude, they serve to little other purpose than to waste the spirits, the force of the mind meeting no resistance, but wasting itself in the air, like our arm when it misses its aim"

Along with all this mental perturbation, symptoms of scurvy, a disease now almost unknown among landsmen, but which, in the days of winter salt meat, before root crops flourished in the Lothians, greatly plagued our forefathers, made their appearance. And, indeed, it may be suspected that physical conditions were, at first, at the bottom of the whole business; for, in 1731, a ravenous appetite set in and, in six weeks from being tall, lean, and raw-boned, Hume says he became sturdy and robust, with a ruddy complexion and a cheerful countenance—eating, sleeping, and feeling well, except that the capacity for intense mental application seemed to be gone. He, therefore, determined to seek out a more active life; and, though he could not and would not "quit his pretensions to learning, but with his last breath," he resolved "to lay them aside for some time, in order the more effectually to resume them."

The careers open to a poor Scottish gentleman in those days were very few; and, as Hume's option lay between a travelling tutorship and a stool in a merchant's office, he chose the latter.

"And having got recommendation to a considerable trader in Bristol, I am just now hastening thither, with a resolution to forget myself, and everything that is past, to engage myself, as far as is possible, in that course of life, and to toss,

about the world from one pole to the other, till I leave this distemper behind me."[1]

But it was all of no use—Nature would have her way—and in the middle of 1736, David Hume, aged twenty-three, without a profession or any assured means of earning a guinea; and having doubtless, by his apparent vacillation, but real tenacity of purpose, once more earned the title of "wake-minded" at home; betook himself to a foreign country.

"I went over to France, with a view of prosecuting my studies in a country retreat: and there I laid that plan of life which I have steadily and successfully pursued. I resolved to make a very rigid frugality supply my deficiency of fortune, to maintain unimpaired my independency, and to regard every object as contemptible except the improvement of my talents in literature."[2]

Hume passed through Paris on his way to Rheims, where he resided for some time; though the greater part of his three years' stay was spent at La Flêche, in frequent intercourse with the Jesuits of the famous college in which Descartes was educated. Here he composed his first work, the *Treatise of Human Nature;* though it would appear from the following passage in the letter to Cheyne, that he had been accumulating materials to that end for some years before he left Scotland.

[1] One cannot but be reminded of young Descartes' renunciation of study for soldiering.

[2] *My Own Life.*

"I found that the moral philosophy transmitted to us by antiquity laboured under the same inconvenience that has been found in their natural philosophy, of being entirely hypothetical, and depending more upon invention than experience: every one consulted his fancy in erecting schemes of virtue and happiness, without regarding human nature, upon which every moral conclusion must depend."

This is the key note of the *Treatise;* of which Hume himself says apologetically, in one of his letters, that it was planned before he was twenty-one and composed before he had reached the age of twenty-five [1]

Under these circumstances, it is probably the most remarkable philosophical work, both intrinsically and in its effects upon the course of thought, that has ever been written. Berkeley, indeed, published the *Essay Towards a New Theory of Vision*, the *Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge*, and the *Three Dialogues*, between the ages of twenty-four and twenty-eight; and thus comes very near to Hume, both in precocity and in influence; but his investigations are more limited in their scope than those of his Scottish contemporary.

The first and second volumes of the *Treatise*, containing Book I., "Of the Understanding," and Book II., "Of the Passions," were published in January, 1739. The

[1] Letter to Gilbert Elliot of Minto, 1751. "So vast an undertaking, planned before I was one-and-twenty, and composed before twenty-five, must necessarily be very defective. I have repented my haste a hundred and a hundred times."



publisher gave fifty pounds for the copyright; which is probably more than an unknown writer of twenty-seven years of age would get for a similar work, at the present time. But, in other respects, its success fell far short of Hume's expectations. In a letter dated the 1st of June, 1739, he writes,—

"I am not much in the humour of such compositions at present, having received news from London of the success of my *Philosophy*, which is but indifferent, if I may judge by the sale of the book, and if I may believe my bookseller."

This, however, indicates a very different reception from that which Hume, looking through the inverted telescope of old age, ascribes to the *Treatise* in *My Own Life*.

"Never literary attempt was more unfortunate than my *Treatise of Human Nature*. It fell *deadborn from the press* without reaching such a distinction as even to excite a murmur among the zealots."

As a matter of fact, it was fully, and, on the whole, respectfully and appreciatively, reviewed in the *History of the Works of the Learned* for November, 1739.[1] Whoever the reviewer may have been, he was a man of discernment, for he says that the work bears "incontestable marks of a great capacity, of a soaring genius, but young, and not yet thoroughly practised;" and he adds, that we shall probably have reason to consider "this, compared with the later productions, in the same light as we view the juvenile works of a

[1] Burton, *Life*, vol. i. p. 109.

Milton, or the first manner of a Raphael or other celebrated painter." In a letter to Hutcheson, Hume merely speaks of this article as "somewhat abusive;" so that his vanity, being young and callow, seems to have been correspondingly wide-mouthed and hard to satiate.

It must be confessed that, on this occasion, no less than on that of his other publications, Hume exhibits no small share of the craving after mere notoriety and vulgar success, as distinct from the pardonable, if not honourable, ambition for solid and enduring fame, which would have harmonised better with his philosophy. Indeed, it appears to be by no means improbable that this peculiarity of Hume's moral constitution was the cause of his gradually forsaking philosophical studies, after the publication of the third part (*On Morals*) of the *Treatise*, in 1740, and turning to those political and historical topics which were likely to yield, and did in fact yield, a much better return of that sort of success which his soul loved. The *Philosophical Essays Concerning the Human Understanding*, which afterwards became the *Inquiry*, is not much more than an abridgment and recast, for popular use, of parts of the *Treatise*, with the addition of the essays on Miracles and on Necessity. In style, it exhibits a great improvement on the *Treatise;* but the substance, if not deteriorated, is certainly not improved. Hume does not really bring his mature powers to bear upon his early speculations, in the later work. The crude fruits have not been ripened, but they have been ruthlessly pruned away, along with the branches which bore them. The result is a pretty shrub enough; but not the tree of knowledge, with its roots firmly fixed in fact, its branches perennially budding forth into new

truths, which Hume might have reared. Perhaps, after all, worthy Mrs. Hume was, in the highest sense, right. Davie was "wake minded," not to see that the world of philosophy was his to overrun and subdue, if he would but persevere in the work he had begun. But no—he must needs turn aside for "success": and verily he had his reward; but not the crown he might have won.

In 1740, Hume seems to have made an acquaintance which rapidly ripened into a life-long friendship. Adam Smith was, at that time, a boy student of seventeen at the University of Glasgow; and Hume sends a copy of the *Treatise* to "Mr. Smith," apparently on the recommendation of the well-known Hutcheson, Professor of Moral Philosophy in the university. It is a remarkable evidence of Adam Smith's early intellectual development, that a youth of his age should be thought worthy of such a present.

In 1741 Hume published anonymously, at Edinburgh, the first volume of *Essays Moral and Political*, which was followed in 1742 by the second volume.

These pieces are written in an admirable style and, though arranged without apparent method, a system of political philosophy may be gathered from their contents. Thus the third essay, *That Politics may be reduced to a Science*, defends that thesis, and dwells on the importance of forms of government.

"So great is the force of laws and of particular forms of government, and so little dependence have they on the humours and tempers of men, that consequences almost as general and certain may sometimes be deduced from them as any which the mathematical sciences afford us." —(III. 15.) (*See* p. 45.)

Hume proceeds to exemplify the evils which inevitably flow from universal suffrage, from aristocratic privilege, and from elective monarchy, by historical examples, and concludes:—

"That an hereditary prince, a nobility without vassals, and a people voting by their representatives, form the best monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy."—(III. 18.)

If we reflect that the following passage of the same essay was written nearly a century and a half ago, it would seem that whatever other changes may have taken place, political warfare remains *in statu quo*:—

"Those who either attack or defend a minister in such a government as ours, where the utmost liberty is allowed, always carry matters to an extreme, and exaggerate his merit or demerit with regard to the public. His enemies are sure to charge him with the greatest enormities, both in domestic and foreign management; and there is no meanness or crime, of which, in their judgment, he is not capable. Unnecessary wars, scandalous treaties, profusion of public treasure, oppressive taxes, every kind of maladministration is ascribed to him. To aggravate the charge, his pernicious conduct, it is said, will extend its baneful influence even to posterity, by undermining the best constitution in the world, and disordering that wise system of laws, institutions, and customs, by which our ancestors, during so many centuries, have been so happily governed. He is not only a wicked minister in himself, but has removed every security provided against wicked ministers for the future.

"On the other hand, the partisans of the minister make his panegyric rise as high as the accusation against him, and celebrate his wise, steady, and moderate conduct in every part of his administration. The honour and interest of the nation

supported abroad, public credit maintained at home, persecution restrained, faction subdued: the merit of all these blessings is ascribed solely to the minister. At the same time, he crowns all his other merits by a religious care of the best government in the world, which he has preserved in all its parts, and has transmitted entire, to be the happiness and security of the latest posterity."—(III. 26.)

Hume sagely remarks that the panegyric and the accusation cannot both be true; and, that what truth there may be in either, rather tends to show that our much-vaunted constitution does not fulfil its chief object, which is to provide a remedy against maladministration. And if it does not—

"we are rather beholden to any minister who undermines it and affords us the opportunity of erecting a better in its place."—III. 28.

The fifth Essay discusses the *Origin of Government*:—

"Man, born in a family, is compelled to maintain society from necessity, from natural inclination, and from habit. The same creature, in his farther progress, is engaged to establish political society, in order to administer justice, without which there can be no peace among them, nor safety, nor mutual intercourse. We are therefore to look upon all the vast apparatus of our government, as having ultimately no other object or purpose but the distribution of justice, or, in other words, the support of the twelve judges. Kings and parliaments, fleets and armies, officers of the court and revenue, ambassadors, ministers and privy councillors, are all subordinate in the end to this part of administration. Even the clergy, as their duty leads them to inculcate morality, may justly be thought, so far as regards this world, to have no other useful object of their institution."—(III. 37.)

The police theory of government has never been stated

more tersely: and, if there were only one state in the world; and if we could be certain by intuition, or by the aid of revelation, that it is wrong for society, as a corporate body, to do anything for the improvement of its members and, thereby, indirectly support the twelve judges, no objection could be raised to it.

Unfortunately the existence of rival or inimical nations furnishes "kings and parliaments, fleets and armies," with a good deal of occupation beyond the support of the twelve judges; and, though the proposition that the State has no business to meddle with anything but the administration of justice, seems sometimes to be regarded as an axiom, it can hardly be said to be intuitively certain, inasmuch as a great many people absolutely repudiate it; while, as yet, the attempt to give it the authority of a revelation has not been made.

As Hume says with profound truth in the fourth essay, *On the First Principles of Government*:—

> "As force is always on the side of the governed, the governors have nothing to support them but opinion. It is, therefore, on opinion only that government is founded; and this maxim extends to the most despotic and most military governments, as well as to the most free and the most popular."—(III. 31.)

But if the whole fabric of social organisation rests on opinion, it may surely be fairly argued that, in the interests of self-preservation, if for no better reason, society has a right to see that the means of forming just opinions are placed within the reach of every one of its members; and, therefore, that due provision for

education, at any rate, is a right and, indeed, a duty of the state.

The three opinions upon which all government, or t. authority of the few over the many, is founded, say Hume, are public interest, right to power, and right to property. No government can permanently exist, unless the majority of the citizens, who are the ultimate depositary of Force, are convinced that it serves the general interest, that it has lawful authority, and that it respects individual rights :—

"A government may endure for several ages, though the balance of power and the balance of property do not coincide But where the original constitution allows any share of power, though small, to an order of men who possess a large share of property, it is easy for them gradually to stretch their authority, and bring the balance of power to coincide with that of property. This has been the case with the House of Commons in England."—(III. 34.)

Hume then points out that, in his time, the authority of the Commons was by no means equivalent to the property and power it represented, and proceeds : —

"Were the members obliged to receive instructions from their constituents, like the Dutch deputies, this would entirely alter the case ; and if such immense power and riches as those of all the Commons of Great Britain, were brought into the scale, it is not easy to conceive that the crown could either influence that multitude of people, or withstand that balance of property. It is true, the crown has great influence over the collective body in the elections of members ; but were this influence, which at present is only exerted once in seven years, to be employed in bringing over the people to every vote, it would soon be wasted, and no skill, popularity, or revenue could support it. I must, therefore, be of opinion that an alteration in this particular would introduce a total alteration in our

government, would soon reduce it to a pure republic; and, perhaps, to a republic of no inconvenient form."—(III. 35.)

Viewed by the light of subsequent events, this is surely a very remarkable example of political sagacity. The members of the House of Commons are not yet delegates; but, with the widening of the suffrage and the rapidly increasing tendency to drill and organise the electorate, and to exact definite pledges from candidates, they are rapidly becoming, if not delegates, at least attorneys for committees of electors. The same causes are constantly tending to exclude men, who combine a keen sense of self-respect with large intellectual capacity, from a position in which the one is as constantly offended, as the other is neutralised. Notwithstanding the attempt of George the Third to resuscitate the royal authority, Hume's foresight has been so completely justified that no one now dreams of the crown exerting the slightest influence upon elections.

In the seventh essay, Hume raises a very interesting discussion as to the probable ultimate result of the forces which were at work in the British Constitution in the first part of the eighteenth century:—

"There has been a sudden and sensible change in the opinions of men, within these last fifty years, by the progress of learning and of liberty. Most people in this island have divested themselves of all superstitious reverence to names and authority; the clergy have much lost their credit; their pretensions and doctrines have been much ridiculed; and even religion can scarcely support itself in the world. The mere name of *king* commands little respect; and to talk of a king as God's vicegerent on earth, or to give him any of those magnificent titles which formerly dazzled mankind, would but excite laughter in every one."—(III. 54.)

In fact, at the present day, the danger to monarchy in Britain would appear to lie, not in increasing love for equality, for which, except as regards the law, Englishmen have never cared, but rather entertain an aversion; nor in any abstract democratic theories, upon which the mass of Englishmen pour the contempt with which they view theories in general; but in the constantly increasing tendency of monarchy to become slightly absurd, from the ever-widening discrepancy between modern political ideas and the theory of kingship. As Hume observes, even in his time, people had left off making believe that a king was a different species of man from other men; and, since his day, more and more such make-believes have become impossible; until the maintenance of kingship in coming generations seems likely to depend, entirely, upon whether it is the general opinion, that a hereditary president of our virtual republic will serve the general interest better than an elective one or not. The tendency of public feeling in this direction is patent, but it does not follow that a republic is to be the final stage of our government. In fact, Hume thinks not:—

"It is well known, that every government must come to a period, and that death is unavoidable to the political, as well as to the animal body. But, as one kind of death may be preferable to another, it may be inquired, whether it be more desirable for the British constitution to terminate in a popular government, or in an absolute monarchy? Here, I would frankly declare, that though liberty be preferable to slavery, in almost every case; yet I should rather wish to see an absolute monarch than a republic in this island. For let us consider what kind of republic we have reason to expect. The question is not concerning any fine imaginary republic of which a man forms a plan in his closet. There is no doubt

but a popular government may be imagined more perfect than an absolute monarchy, or even than our present constitution. But what reason have we to expect that any such government will ever be established in Great Britain, upon the dissolution of our monarchy? If any single person acquire power enough to take our constitution to pieces, and put it up anew, he is really an absolute monarch; and we have already had an instance of this kind, sufficient to convince us, that such a person will never resign his power, or establish any free government. Matters, therefore, must be trusted to their natural progress and operation; and the House of Commons, according to its present constitution, must be the only legislature in such a popular government. The inconveniences attending such a situation of affairs present themselves by thousands. If the House of Commons, in such a case, ever dissolve itself, which is not to be expected, we may look for a civil war every election. If it continue itself, we shall suffer all the tyranny of a faction subdivided into new factions. And, as such a violent government cannot long subsist, we shall at last, after many convulsions and civil wars, find repose in absolute monarchy, which it would have been happier for us to have established peaceably from the beginning. Absolute monarchy, therefore, is the easiest death, the true *Euthanasia* of the British constitution.

"Thus if we have more reason to be jealous of monarchy, because the danger is more imminent from that quarter; we have also reason to be more jealous of popular government, because that danger is more terrible. This may teach us a lesson of moderation in all our political controversies."—(III. 55.)

One may admire the sagacity of these speculations, and the force and clearness with which they are expressed, without altogether agreeing with them. That an analogy between the social and bodily organism exists, and is, in many respects, clear and full of instructive suggestion, is undeniable. Yet a state answers, not to an individual, but to a generic type; and there is

no reason, in the nature of things, why any generic type should die out. The type of the pearly *Nautilus*, highly organised as it is, has persisted with but little change from the Silurian epoch till now; and, so long as terrestrial conditions remain approximately similar to what they are at present, there is no more reason why it should cease to exist in the next, than in the past, hundred million years or so. The true ground for doubting the possibility of the establishment of absolute monarchy in Britain is, that opinion seems to have passed through, and left far behind, the stage at which such a change would be possible; and the true reason for doubting the permanency of a republic, if it is ever established, lies in the fact, that a republic requires for its maintenance a far higher standard of morality and of intelligence in the members of the state than any other form of government. Samuel gave the Israelites a king because they were not righteous enough to do without one, with a pretty plain warning of what they were to expect from the gift. And, up to this time, the progress of such republics as have been established in the world has not been such, as to lead to any confident expectation that their foundation is laid on a sufficiently secure subsoil of public spirit, morality, and intelligence. On the contrary, they exhibit examples of personal corruption and of political profligacy as fine as any hotbed of despotism has ever produced; while they fail in the primary duty of the administration of justice, as none but an effete despotism has ever failed.

Hume has been accused of departing, in his old age, from the liberal principles of his youth; and, no doubt, he was careful, in the later editions of the *Essays*, to expunge everything that savoured of democratic tendencies. But

the passage just quoted shows that this was no recantation, but simply a confirmation, by his experience of one of the most debased periods of English history, of those evil tendencies attendant on popular government, of which, from the first, he was fully aware.

In the ninth essay, *On the Parties of Great Britain*, there occurs a passage which, while it affords evidence of the marvellous change which has taken place in the social condition of Scotland since 1741, contains an assertion respecting the state of the Jacobite party at that time, which at first seems surprising :—

"As violent things have not commonly so long a duration as moderate, we actually find that the Jacobite party is almost entirely vanished from among us, and that the distinction of *Court* and *Country*, which is but creeping in at London, is the only one that is ever mentioned in this kingdom. Beside the violence and openness of the Jacobite party, another reason has perhaps contributed to produce so sudden and so visible an alteration in this part of Britain. There are only two ranks of men among us; gentlemen who have some fortune and education, and the meanest slaving poor; without any considerable number of that middling rank of men, which abound more in England, both in cities and in the country, than in any other part of the world. The slaving poor are incapable of any principles; gentlemen may be converted to true principles, by time and experience. The middling rank of men have curiosity and knowledge enough to form principles, but not enough to form true ones, or correct any prejudices that they may have imbibed. And it is among the middling rank of people that Tory principles do at present prevail most in England."—(III. 80, *note*.)

Considering that the Jacobite rebellion of 1745 broke out only four years after this essay was published, the assertion that the Jacobite party had "almost entirely

vanished in 1741" sounds strange enough: and the passage which contains it is omitted in the third edition of the *Essays*, published in 1748. Nevertheless, Hume was probably right, as the outbreak of '45 was little better than a Highland raid, and the Pretender obtained no important following in the Lowlands.

No less curious, in comparison with what would be said nowadays, is Hume's remark in the Essay on the *Rise of the Arts and Sciences* that—

"The English are become sensible of the scandalous licentiousness of their stage from the example of the French decency and morals."—(III. 135.)

And it is perhaps as surprising to be told, by a man of Hume's literary power, that the first polite prose in the English language was written by Swift. Locke and Temple (with whom Sprat is astoundingly conjoined) "knew too little of the rules of art to be esteemed elegant writers," and the prose of Bacon, Harrington, and Milton is "altogether stiff and pedantic." Hobbes, who whether he should be called a "polite" writer or not, is a master of vigorous English; Clarendon, Addison, and Steele (the last two, surely, were "polite" writers in all conscience) are not mentioned.

On the subject of *National Character*, about which more nonsense, and often very mischievous nonsense, has been and is talked than upon any other topic, Hume's observations are full of sense and shrewdness. He distinguishes between the *moral* and the *physical* causes of national character, enumerating under the former—

"The nature of the government, the revolutions of public affairs, the plenty or penury in which people live, the

situation of the nation with regard to its neighbours, and such like circumstances."—(III. 225.)

and under the latter :—

"Those qualities of the air and climate, which are supposed to work insensibly on the temper, by altering the tone and habit of the body, and giving a particular complexion, which, though reflexion and reason may sometimes overcome it, will yet prevail among the generality of mankind, and have an influence on their manners."—(III. 225.)

While admitting and exemplifying the great influence of moral causes, Hume remarks—

"As to physical causes, I am inclined to doubt altogether of their operation in this particular; nor do I think that men owe anything of their temper or genius to the air, food, or climate."—(III. 227.)

Hume certainly would not have accepted the "rice theory" in explanation of the social state of the Hindoos; and, it may be safely assumed, that he would not have had recourse to the circumambience of the "melancholy main" to account for the troublous history of Ireland. He supports his views by a variety of strong arguments, among which, at the present conjuncture, it is worth noting that the following occurs—

"Where any accident, as a difference in language or religion, keeps two nations, inhabiting the same country, from mixing with one another, they will preserve during several centuries a distinct and even opposite set of manners. The integrity, gravity, and bravery of the Turks, form an exact contrast to the deceit, levity, and cowardice of the modern Greeks."—(III. 233.)

The question of the influence of race, which plays so

great a part in modern political speculations, was hardly broached in Hume's time, but he had an inkling of its importance :—

"I am apt to suspect the Negroes to be naturally inferior to the Whites. There scarcely ever was a civilised nation of that complexion, nor even any individual, eminent either in action or speculation. . . . Such a uniform and constant difference [between the negroes and the whites] could not happen in so many countries and ages, if nature had not made an original distinction between these breeds of men. . . . In Jamaica, indeed, they talk of one Negro as a man of parts and learning; but it is likely he is admired for slender accomplishments, like a parrot who speaks a few words plainly."—(III. 236.)

The *Essays* met with the success they deserved. Hume wrote to Henry Home in June, 1742 :—

"The Essays are all sold in London, as I am informed by two letters from English gentlemen of my acquaintance. There is a demand for them; and, as one of them tells me, Innys, the great bookseller in Paul's Churchyard, wonders there is not a new edition, for he cannot find copies for his customers. I am also told that Dr. Butler has everywhere recommended them; so that I hope that they will have some success."

Hume had sent Butler a copy of the *Treatise* and had called upon him, in London, but he was out of town; and being shortly afterwards made Bishop of Bristol, Hume seems to have thought that further advances on his part might not be well received.

Greatly comforted by this measure of success, Hume remained at Ninewells, rubbing up his Greek, until 1745; when, at the mature age of thirty-four, he made his entry into practical life, by becoming bear-leader to

the Marquis of Annandale, a young nobleman of feeble body and feebler mind. As might have been predicted, this venture was not more fortunate than his previous ones; and, after a year's endurance, diversified latterly with pecuniary squabbles, in which Hume's tenacity about a somewhat small claim is remarkable, the engagement came to an end.

CHAPTER II.

LATER YEARS: THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

In 1744, Hume's friends had endeavoured to procure his nomination to the Chair of "Ethics and pneumatic philosophy"[1] in the University of Edinburgh. About this matter he writes to his friend William Mure:—

"The accusation of heresy, deism, scepticism, atheism, &c., &c., &c. was started against me; but never took, being bore down by the contrary authority of all the good company in town."

If the "good company in town" bore down the first three of these charges, it is to be hoped, for the sake of their veracity, that they knew their candidate chiefly as the very good company that he always was; and had paid as little attention, as good company usually does, to so solid a work as the *Treatise*. Hume expresses a naïve surprise, not unmixed with indignation, that Hutcheson and Leechman, both clergymen and sincere,

[1] "Pneumatic philosophy" must not be confounded with the theory of elastic fluids; though, as Scottish chairs have, before now, combined natural with civil history, the mistake would be pardonable.

though liberal, professors of orthodoxy, should have expressed doubts as to his fitness for becoming a professedly presbyterian teacher of presbyterian youth. The town council, however, would not have him, and filled up the place with a safe nobody.

In May, 1746, a new prospect opened. General St. Clair was appointed to the command of an expedition to Canada, and he invited Hume, at a week's notice, to be his secretary; to which office that of judge advocate was afterwards added.

Hume writes to a friend: "The office is very genteel, 10*s.* a day, perquisites, and no expenses;" and, to another, he speculates on the chance of procuring a company in an American regiment. "But this I build not on, nor indeed am I very fond of it," he adds; and this was fortunate, for the expedition, after dawdling away the summer in port, was suddenly diverted to an attack on L'Orient, where it achieved a huge failure and returned ignominiously to England.

A letter to Henry Home, written when this unlucky expedition was recalled, shows that Hume had already seriously turned his attention to history. Referring to an invitation to go over to Flanders with the General, he says:

"Had I any fortune which would give me a prospect of leisure and opportunity to prosecute my *historical projects*, nothing could be more useful to me, and I should pick up more literary knowledge in one campaign by being in the General's family, and being introduced frequently to the Duke's, than most officers could do after many years' service. But to what can all this serve? I am a philosopher, and so I suppose must continue."

But this vaticination was shortly to prove erroneous.

Hume seems to have made a very favourable impression on General St. Clair, as he did upon every one with whom he came into personal contact; for, being charged with a mission to the court of Turin, in 1748, the General insisted upon the appointment of Hume as his secretary. He further made him one of his aides-de-camp; so that the philosopher was obliged to encase his more than portly, and by no means elegant, figure in a military uniform. Lord Charlemont, who met him at Turin, says he was "disguised in scarlet," and that he wore his uniform "like a grocer of the train-bands." Hume, always ready for a joke at his own expense, tells of the considerate kindness with which, at a reception at Vienna, the Empress-dowager released him and his friends from the necessity of walking backwards. "We esteemed ourselves very much obliged to her for this attention, especially my companions, who were desperately afraid of my falling on them and crushing them."

Notwithstanding the many attractions of this appointment, Hume writes that he leaves home "with infinite regret, where I had treasured up stores of study and plans of thinking for many years;" and his only consolation is that the opportunity of becoming conversant with state affairs may be profitable :—

"I shall have an opportunity of seeing courts and camps: and if I can afterward be so happy as to attain leisure and other opportunities, this knowledge may even turn to account to me as a man of letters, which I confess has always been the sole object of my ambition. I have long had an intention, in my riper years, of composing some history; and I question not but some greater experience in the operations of the field and the intrigues of the cabinet will be requisite, in order to enable me to speak with judgment on these subjects."

Hume returned to London in 1749, and, during his stay there, his mother died, to his heartfelt sorrow. A curious story in connection with this event is told by Dr. Carlyle, who knew Hume well, and whose authority is perfectly trustworthy.

"Mr. Boyle hearing of it, soon after went to his apartment, for they lodged in the same house, where he found him in the deepest affliction and in a flood of tears. After the usual topics and condolences Mr. Boyle said to him, 'My friend, you owe this uncommon grief to having thrown off the principles of religion: for if you had not, you would have been consoled with the firm belief that the good lady, who was not only the best of mothers, but the most pious of Christians, was completely happy in the realms of the just. To which David replied, 'Though I throw out my speculations to entertain the learned and metaphysical world, yet in other things I do not think so differently from the rest of the world as you imagine.'"

If Hume had told this story to Dr. Carlyle, the latter would have said so; it must therefore have come from Mr. Boyle; and one would like to have the opportunity of cross-examining that gentleman as to Hume's exact words and their context, before implicitly accepting his version of the conversation. Mr. Boyle's experience of mankind must have been small, if he had not seen the firmest of believers overwhelmed with grief by a like loss, and as completely inconsolable. Hume may have thrown off Mr. Boyle's "principles of religion," but he was none the less a very honest man, perfectly open and candid, and the last person to use ambiguous phraseology, among his friends; unless, indeed, he saw no other way of putting a stop to the intrusion of unmannerly twaddle amongst the bitter-sweet

memories stirred in his affectionate nature by so heavy a blow.

The *Philosophical Essays* or *Inquiry* was published in 1748, while Hume was away with General St. Clair, and, on his return to England, he had the mortification to find it overlooked in the hubbub caused by Middleton's *Free Inquiry*, and its bold handling of the topic of the *Essay on Miracles*, by which Hume doubtless expected the public to be startled.

Between 1749 and 1751, Hume resided at Ninewells, with his brother and sister, and busied himself with the composition of his most finished, if not his most important works, the *Dialogues on Natural Religion*, the *Inquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*, and the *Political Discourses*.

The Dialogues on Natural Religion were touched and re-touched, at intervals, for a quarter of a century, and were not published till after Hume's death: but the *Inquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals* appeared in 1751, and the *Political Discourses* in 1752. Full reference will be made to the two former in the exposition of Hume's philosophical views. The last has been well said to be the "cradle of political economy: and much as that science has been investigated and expounded in later times, these earliest, shortest, and simplest developments of its principles are still read with delight even by those who are masters of all the literature of this great subject."[1]

The *Wealth of Nations*, the masterpiece of Hume's close friend, Adam Smith, it must be remembered, did not appear before 1776, so that, in political economy,

[1] Burton's *Life of David Hume*, i. p. 354.

no less than in philosophy, Hume was an original, a daring, and a fertile innovator.

The *Political Essays* had a great and rapid success; translated into French in 1753, and again in 1754, they conferred a European reputation upon their author; and, what was more to the purpose, influenced the later French school of economists of the eighteenth century.

By this time, Hume had not only attained a high reputation in the world of letters, but he considered himself a man of independent fortune. His frugal habits had enabled him to accumulate £1,000, and he tells Michael Ramsay in 1751:—

"While interest remains as at present, I have £50 a year, a hundred pounds worth of books, great store of linens and fine clothes, and near £100 in my pocket; along with order, frugality, a strong spirit of independency, good health, a contented humour, and an unabated love of study. In these circumstances I must esteem myself one of the happy and fortunate; and so far from being willing to draw my ticket over again in the lottery of life, there are very few prizes with which I would make an exchange. After some deliberation, I am resolved to settle in Edinburgh, and hope I shall be able with these revenues to say with Horace:—

'Est bona librorum et provisæ frugis in annum
Copia.'"

It would be difficult to find a better example of the honourable independence and cheerful self-reliance which should distinguish a man of letters, and which characterised Hume throughout his career. By honourable effort, the boy's noble ideal of life, became the man's reality; and, at forty, Hume had the happiness of finding that he had not wasted his youth in the pursuit of illusions, but that "the solid certainty of

waking bliss" lay before him in the free play of his powers in their appropriate sphere.

In 1751, Hume removed to Edinburgh and took up his abode on a flat in one of those prodigious houses in the Lawnmarket, which still excite the admiration of tourists; afterwards moving to a house in the Canongate. His sister joined him, adding £30 a year to the common stock; and, in one of his charmingly playful letters to Dr. Clephane, he thus describes his establishment, in 1753.

"I shall exult and triumph to you a little that I have now at last—being turned of forty, to my own honour, to that of learning, and to that of the present age—arrived at the dignity of being a householder.

"About seven months ago, I got a house of my own, and completed a regular family, consisting of a head, viz., myself, and two inferior members, a maid and a cat. My sister has since joined me, and keeps me company. With frugality, I can reach, I find, cleanliness, warmth, light, plenty, and contentment. What would you have more? Independence? I have it in a supreme degree. Honour? That is not altogether wanting. Grace? That will come in time. A wife? That is none of the indispensable requisites of life. Books? That *is* one of them; and I have more than I can use. In short, I cannot find any pleasure of consequence which I am not possessed of in a greater or less degree: and, without any great effort of philosophy, I may be easy and satisfied.

"As there is no happiness without occupation, I have begun a work which will occupy me several years, and which yields me much satisfaction. 'Tis a History of Britain from the Union of the Crowns to the present time. I have already finished the reign of King James. My friends flatter me (by this I mean that they don't flatter me) that I have succeeded."

In 1752, the Faculty of Advocates elected Hume their

librarian, an office which, though it yielded little emolument—the salary was only forty pounds a year—was valuable as it placed the resources of a large library at his disposal. The proposal to give Hume even this paltry place caused a great outcry, on the old score of infidelity. But as Hume writes, in a jubilant letter to Clephane (February 4, 1752) :—

"I carried the election by a considerable majority. . . . What is more extraordinary, the cry of religion could not hinder the ladies from being violently my partisans, and I owe my success in a great measure to their solicitations. One has broke off all commerce with her lover because he voted against me! And Mr. Lockhart, in a speech to the Faculty, said there was no walking the streets, nor even enjoying one's own fireside, on account of their importunate zeal. The town says that even his bed was not safe for him, though his wife was cousin-german to my antagonist.

"'Twas vulgarly given out that the contest was between Deists and Christians, and when the news of my success came to the playhouse, the whisper rose that the Christians were defeated. Are you not surprised that we could keep our popularity, notwithstanding this imputation, which my friends could not deny to be well founded?"

It would seem that the "good company" was less enterprising in its asseverations in this canvass than in the last.

The first volume of the *History of Great Britain, containing the reign of James I. and Charles I.*, was published in 1754. At first, the sale was large, especially in Edinburgh, and if notoriety *per se* was Hume's object, he attained it. But he liked applause as well as fame and, to his bitter disappointment, he says :—

"I was assailed by one cry of reproach, disapprobation, and even detestation: English, Scotch, and Irish, Whig and Tory, Churchman and Sectary, Freethinker and Religionist, Patriot and Courtier, united in their rage against the man who had presumed to shed a generous tear for the fate of Charles I. and the Earl of Strafford; and after the first ebullitions of their fury were over, what was still more mortifying, the book seemed to fall into oblivion. Mr. Millar told me that in a twelve-month he sold only forty-five copies of it. I scarcely, indeed, heard of one man in the three kingdoms, considerable for rank or letters, that could endure the book. I must only except the primate of England, Dr. Herring, and the primate of Ireland, Dr. Stone, which seem two odd exceptions. These dignified prelates separately sent me messages not to be discouraged."

It certainly is odd to think of David Hume being comforted in his affliction by the independent and spontaneous sympathy of a pair of archbishops. But the instincts of the dignified prelates guided them rightly; for, as the great painter of English history in Whig pigments has been careful to point out,[1] Hume's historical picture, though a great work, drawn by a master hand, has all the lights Tory, and all the shades Whig.

Hume's ecclesiastical enemies seem to have thought that their opportunity had now arrived; and an attempt was made to get the General Assembly of 1756 to appoint a committee to inquire into his writings. But, after a keen debate, the proposal was rejected by fifty votes to seventeen. Hume does not appear to have troubled himself about the matter, and does not even think it worth mention in *My Own Life*.

[1] Lord Macaulay, Article on History, *Edinburgh Review*, vol lxvii.

In 1756 he tells Clephane that he is worth £1,600 sterling, and consequently master of an income which must have been wealth to a man of his frugal habits. In the same year, he published the second volume of the *History*, which met with a much better reception than the first; and, in 1757, one of his most remarkable works, the *Natural History of Religion*, appeared. In the same year, he resigned his office of librarian to the Faculty of Advocates, and he projected removal to London, probably to superintend the publication of the additional volume of the *History*.

"I shall certainly be in London next summer; and probably to remain there during life: at least, if I can settle myself to my mind, which I beg you to have an eye to. A room in a sober discreet family, who would not be averse to admit a sober, discreet, virtuous, regular, quiet, goodnatured man of a bad character—such a room, I say, would suit me extremely."[1]

The promised visit took place in the latter part of the year 1758, and he remained in the metropolis for the greater part of 1759. The two volumes of the *History of England under the House of Tudor* were published in London, shortly after Hume's return to Edinburgh; and, according to his own account, they raised almost as great a clamour as the first two had done.

Busily occupied with the continuation of his historical labours, Hume remained in Edinburgh until 1763; when, at the request of Lord Hertford, who was going as ambassador to France, he was appointed to the embassy; with the promise of the secretaryship, and, in the mean-

[1] Letter to Clephane, 3rd September, 1757.

while, performing the duties of that office. At first, Hume declined the offer; but, as it was particularly honourable to so well abused a man, on account of Lord Hertford's high reputation for virtue and piety,[1] and no less advantageous by reason of the increase of fortune which it secured to him, he eventually accepted it.

In France, Hume's reputation stood far higher than in Britain; several of his works had been translated; he had exchanged letters with Montesquieu and with Helvetius; Rousseau had appealed to him; and the charming Madame de Boufflers had drawn him into a correspondence, marked by almost passionate enthusiasm on her part, and as fair an imitation of enthusiasm as Hume was capable of, on his. In the extraordinary mixture of learning, wit, humanity, frivolity, and profligacy which then characterised the highest French society, a new sensation was worth anything, and it mattered little whether the cause thereof was a philosopher or a poodle; so Hume had a great success in the Parisian world. Great nobles fêted him, and great ladies were not content unless the "gros David" was to be seen at their receptions, and in their boxes at the theatre. "At the opera his broad unmeaning face was usually to be seen *entre deux jolis minois*," says Lord Charlemont.[2]

[1] "You must know that Lord Hertford has so high a character for piety, that his taking me by the hand is a kind of regeneration to me, and all past offences are now wiped off. But all these views are trifling to one of my age and temper."—*Hume to Edmonstone*, 9th January, 1764. Lord Hertford had procured him a pension of £200 a year for life from the King, and the secretaryship was worth £1000 a year.

[2] Madame d'Epinay gives a ludicrous account of Hume's performance when pressed into a *tableau*, as a Sultan between two

Hume's cool head was by no means turned; but he took the goods the gods provided with much satisfaction; and everywhere won golden opinions by his unaffected good sense and thorough kindness of heart.

Over all this part of Hume's career, as over the surprising episode of the quarrel with Rousseau, if that can be called quarrel which was lunatic malignity on Rousseau's side and thorough generosity and patience on Hume's, I may pass lightly. The story is admirably told by Mr. Burton, to whose volumes I refer the reader. Nor need I dwell upon Hume's short tenure of office in London, as Under-Secretary of State, between 1767 and 1769. Success and wealth are rarely interesting, and Hume's case is no exception to the rule.

According to his own description the cares of official life were not overwhelming.

"My way of life here is very uniform and by no means disagreeable. I have all the forenoon in the Secretary's house, from ten till three, when there arrive from time to time messengers that bring me all the secrets of the kingdom, and, indeed, of Europe, Asia, Africa, and America. I am seldom hurried; but have leisure at intervals to take up a book, or write a private letter, or converse with a friend that may call for me; and from dinner to bed-time is all my own. If you add to this that the person with whom I have the chief, if not only, transactions, is the most reasonable,

slaves, personated for the occasion by two of the prettiest women in Paris:—

"Il les regarde attentivement, *il se frappe le ventre* et les genoux à plusieurs reprises et ne trouve jamais autre chose à leur dire que *Eh bien! mes demoiselles.—Eh bien! vous voilà donc. . . . Eh bien! vous voilà . . . vous voilà ici?* Cette phrase dura un quart d'heure sans qu'il pût en sortir. Une d'elles se leva d'impatience: Ah, dit-elle, je m'en étois bien doutée, cet homme n'est bon qu'à manger du veau!"—Burton's *Life of Hume*, vol. ii. p. 224.

equal-tempered, and gentleman-like man imaginable, and Lady Aylesbury the same, you will certainly think I have no reason to complain; and I am far from complaining. I only shall not regret when my duty is over; because to me the situation can lead to nothing, at least in all probability; and reading, and sauntering, and lounging, and dozing, which I call thinking, is my supreme happiness—I mean my full contentment."

Hume's duty was soon over, and he returned to Edinburgh in 1769, "very opulent" in the possession of £1,000 a year, and determined to take what remained to him of life pleasantly and easily. In October, 1769, he writes to Elliot:—

"I have been settled here two months, and am here body and soul, without casting the least thought of regret to London, or even to Paris . . . I live still, and must for a twelvemonth, in my old house in James's Court, which is very cheerful and even elegant, but too small to display my great talent for cookery, the science to which I intend to addict the remaining years of my life. I have just now lying on the table before me a receipt for making *soupe à la reine*, copied with my own hand; for beef and cabbage (a charming dish) and old mutton and old claret nobody excels me. I make also sheep's-head broth in a manner that Mr. Keith speaks of for eight days after; and the Duc de Nivernois would bind himself apprentice to my lass to learn it. I have already sent a challenge to David Moncreiff: you will see that in a twelvemonth he will take to the writing of history, the field I have deserted; for as to the giving of dinners, he can now have no further pretensions. I should have made a very bad use of my abode in Paris if I could not get the better of a mere provincial like him. All my friends encourage me in this ambition; as thinking it will redound very much to my honour."

In 1770, Hume built himself a house in the new town

of Edinburgh, which was then springing up. It was the first house in the street, and a frolicsome young lady chalked upon the wall "St. David's Street." Hume's servant complained to her master, who replied, "Never mind, lassie, many a better man has been made a saint of before," and the street retains its title to this day.

In the following six years, the house in St. David's Street was the centre of the accomplished and refined society which then distinguished Edinburgh. Adam Smith, Blair, and Ferguson were within easy reach; and what remains of Hume's correspondence with Sir Gilbert Elliot, Colonel Edmonstone, and Mrs. Cockburn gives pleasant glimpses of his social surroundings, and enables us to understand his contentment with his absence from the more perturbed, if more brilliant, worlds of Paris and London.

Towards London, Londoners, and indeed Englishmen in general, Hume entertained a dislike, mingled with contempt, which was as nearly rancorous as any emotion of his could be. During his residence in Paris, in 1764 and 1765, he writes to Blair:—

"The taste for literature is neither decayed nor depraved here, as with the barbarians who inhabit the banks of the Thames."

And he speaks of the "general regard paid to genius and learning" in France as one of the points in which it most differs from England. Ten years later, he cannot even thank Gibbon for his History without the left-handed compliment, that he should never have expected such an excellent work from the pen of an Englishman. Early in 1765, Hume writes to Millar:—

"The rage and prejudice of parties frighten me, and above all, this rage against the Scots, which is so dishonourable, and indeed so infamous, to the English nation. We hear that it increases every day without the least appearance of provocation on our part. It has frequently made me resolve never in my life to set foot on English ground. I dread, if I should undertake a more modern history, the impertinence and ill-manners to which it would expose me; and I was willing to know from you whether former prejudices had so far subsided as to ensure me of a good reception."

His fears were kindly appeased by Millar's assurance that the English were not prejudiced against the Scots in general, but against the particular Scot, Lord Bute, who was supposed to be the guide, philosopher, and friend, of both the King and his mother.

To care nothing about literature, to dislike Scotchmen, and to be insensible to the merits of David Hume, was a combination of iniquities on the part of the English nation, which would have been amply sufficient to ruffle the temper of the philosophic historian, who, without being foolishly vain, had certainly no need of what has been said to be the one form of prayer in which his countrymen, torn as they are by theological differences, agree; "Lord! gie us a gude conceit o' oursels." But when, to all this, these same Southrons added a passionate admiration for Lord Chatham, who was in Hume's eyes a charlatan; and filled up the cup of their abominations by cheering for "Wilkes and Liberty," Hume's wrath knew no bounds, and, between 1768 and 1770, he pours a perfect Jeremiad into the bosom of his friend Sir Gilbert Elliot.

"Oh! how I long to see America and the East Indies revolted, totally and finally—the revenue reduced to half—

public credit fully discredited by bankruptcy—the third of London in ruins, and the rascally mob subdued! I think I am not too old to despair of being witness to all these blessings.

"I am delighted to see the daily and hourly progress of madness and folly and wickedness in England. The consummation of these qualities are the true ingredients for making a fine narrative in history, especially if followed by some signal and ruinous convulsion—as I hope will soon be the case with that pernicious people!"

Even from the secure haven of James's Court, the maledictions continue to pour forth:—

"Nothing but a rebellion and bloodshed will open the eyes of that deluded people; though were they alone concerned, I think it is no matter what becomes of them. . . . Our government has become a chimera, and is too perfect, in point of liberty, for so rude a beast as an Englishman; who is a man, a bad animal too, corrupted by above a century of licentiousness. The misfortune is that this liberty can scarcely be retrenched without danger of being entirely lost; at least the fatal effects of licentiousness must first be made palpable by some extreme mischief resulting from it. I may wish that the catastrophe should rather fall on our posterity, but it hastens on with such large strides as to leave little room for hope.

"I am running over again the last edition of my History, in order to correct it still further. I either soften or expunge many villainous seditious Whig strokes which had crept into it. I wish that my indignation at the present madness, encouraged by lies, calumnies, imposture, and every infamous act usual among popular leaders, may not throw me into the opposite extreme."

A wise wish, indeed. Posterity respectfully concurs therein; and subjects Hume's estimate of England and

things English to such modifications as it would probably have undergone had the wish been fulfilled.

In 1775, Hume's health began to fail; and, in the spring of the following year, his disorder, which appears to have been hæmorrhage of the bowels, attained such a height that he knew it must be fatal. So he made his will, and wrote *My Own Life*, the conclusion of which is one of the most cheerful, simple, and dignified leave-takings of life and all its concerns, extant.

"I now reckon upon a speedy dissolution. I have suffered very little pain from my disorder; and what is more strange, have, notwithstanding the great decline of my person, never suffered a moment's abatement of spirits; insomuch that were I to name the period of my life which I should most choose to pass over again, I might be tempted to point to this later period. I possess the same ardour as ever in study and the same gaiety in company; I consider, besides, that a man of sixty-five, by dying, cuts off only a few years of infirmities; and though I see many symptoms of my literary reputation's breaking out at last with additional lustre, I know that I could have but few years to enjoy it. It is difficult to be more detached from life than I am at present.

"To conclude historically with my own character, I am, or rather was (for that is the style I must now use in speaking of myself, which emboldens me the more to speak my sentiments); I was, I say, a man of mild dispositions, of command of temper, of an open, social, and cheerful humour, capable of attachment, but little susceptible of enmity, and of great moderation in all my passions. Even my love of literary fame, my ruling passion, never soured my temper, notwithstanding my frequent disappointments. My company was not unacceptable to the young and careless, as well as to the studious and literary; and as I took a particular pleasure in the company of modest women, I had no reason to be displeased

with the reception I met with from them. In a word, though most men any wise eminent, have found reason to complain of calumny, I never was touched or even attacked by her baleful tooth; and though I wantonly exposed myself to the rage of both civil and religious factions, they seemed to be disarmed in my behalf of their wonted fury. My friends never had occasion to vindicate any one circumstance of my character and conduct; not but that the zealots, we may well suppose, would have been glad to invent and propagate any story to my disadvantage, but they could never find any which they thought would wear the face of probability. I cannot say there is no vanity in making this funeral oration of myself, but I hope it is not a misplaced one; and this is a matter of fact which is easily cleared and ascertained."

Hume died in Edinburgh on the 25th of August, 1776, and, a few days later, his body, attended by a great concourse of people, who seem to have anticipated for it the fate appropriate to the remains of wizards and necromancers, was deposited in a spot selected by himself, in an old burial-ground on the eastern slope of the Calton Hill.

From the summit of this hill, there is a prospect unequalled by any to be seen from the midst of a great city. Westward lies the Forth, and beyond it, dimly blue, the far away Highland hills; eastward, rise the bold contours of Arthur's Seat and the rugged crags of the Castle rock, with the grey Old Town of Edinburgh; while, far below, from a maze of crowded thoroughfares, the hoarse murmur of the toil of a polity of energetic men is borne upon the ear. At times, a man may be as solitary here as in a veritable wilderness; and may meditate undisturbedly upon the epitome of nature and of man—the kingdoms of this world—spread out before him.

Surely, there is a fitness in the choice of this last resting-place by the philosopher and historian, who saw so clearly that these two kingdoms form but one realm, governed by uniform laws and alike based on impenetrable darkness and eternal silence: and faithful to the last to that profound veracity which was the secret of his philosophic greatness, he ordered that the simple Roman tomb which marks his grave should bear no inscription but

DAVID HUME

BORN 1711. DIED 1776.

Leaving it to posterity to add the rest.

It was by the desire and at the suggestion of my friend, the Editor of this Series, that I undertook to attempt to help posterity in the difficult business of knowing what to add to Hume's epitaph; and I might, with justice, throw upon him the responsibility of my apparent presumption in occupying a place among the men of letters, who are engaged with him, in their proper function of writing about English Men of Letters.

That to which succeeding generations have made, are making, and will make, continual additions, however, is Hume's fame as a philosopher; and, though I know that my plea will add to my offence in some quarters, I must plead, in extenuation of my audacity, that philosophy lies in the province of science, and not in that of letters.

In dealing with Hume's Life, I have endeavoured, as far as possible, to make him speak for himself. If the extracts from his letters and essays which I have given

do not sufficiently show what manner of man he was, I am sure that nothing I could say would make the case plainer. In the exposition of Hume's philosophy which follows, I have pursued the same plan, and I have applied myself to the task of selecting and arranging in systematic order, the passages which appeared to me to contain the clearest statements of Hume's opinions.

I should have been glad to be able to confine myself to this duty, and to limit my own comments to so much as was absolutely necessary to connect my excerpts. Here and there, however, it must be confessed that more is seen of my thread than of Hume's beads. My excuse must be an ineradicable tendency to try to make things clear; while, I may further hope, that there is nothing in what I may have said, which is inconsistent with the logical development of Hume's principles.

My authority for the facts of Hume's life is the admirable biography, published in 1846, by Mr. John Hill Burton. The edition of Hume's works from which all citations are made is that published by Black and Tait in Edinburgh, in 1826. In this edition, the Essays are reprinted from the edition of 1777, corrected by the author for the press a short time before his death. It is well printed in four handy volumes; and as my copy has long been in my possession, and bears marks of much reading, it would have been troublesome for me to refer to any other. But, for the convenience of those who possess some other edition, the following table of the contents of the edition of 1826, with the paging of the four volumes, is given :—

VOLUME I.

TREATISE OF HUMAN NATURE.

Book I. *Of the Understanding*, p. 5 to the end, p. 347.

VOLUME II.

TREATISE OF HUMAN NATURE.

Book II. *Of the Passions*, p. 3—p. 215.

Book III. *Of Morals*, p. 219—p. 415.

DIALOGUES CONCERNING NATURAL RELIGION, p. 419—p. 548.

APPENDIX TO THE TREATISE, p. 551—p. 560.

VOLUME III.

ESSAYS, MORAL AND POLITICAL, p. 3—p. 282.

POLITICAL DISCOURSES, p. 285—p. 579.

VOLUME IV.

AN INQUIRY CONCERNING HUMAN UNDERSTANDING, p. 3—p. 233.

AN INQUIRY CONCERNING THE PRINCIPLES OF MORALS, p. 237—p. 431.

THE NATURAL HISTORY OF RELIGION, p. 435—p. 513.

ADDITIONAL ESSAYS, p. 517—p. 577.

As the volume and the page of the volume are given in my references, it will be easy, by the help of this table, to learn where to look for any passage cited, in differently arranged editions.

PART II.

HUME'S PHILOSOPHY.

CHAPTER I.

THE OBJECT AND SCOPE OF PHILOSOPHY.

KANT has said that the business of philosophy is to answer three questions: What can I know? What ought I to do? and For what may I hope? But it is pretty plain that these three resolve themselves, in the long run, into the first. For rational expectation and moral action are alike based upon beliefs; and a belief is void of justification, unless its subject-matter lies within the boundaries of possible knowledge, and unless its evidence satisfies the conditions which experience imposes as the guarantee of credibility.

Fundamentally, then, philosophy is the answer to the question, What can I know? and it is by applying itself to this problem, that philosophy is properly distinguished as a special department of scientific research. What is commonly called science, whether mathematical, physical, or biological, consists of the answers which mankind

have been able to give to the inquiry, What do I know? They furnish us with the results of the mental operations which constitute thinking; while philosophy, in the stricter sense of the term, inquires into the foundation of the first principles which those operations assume or imply.

But though, by reason of the special purpose of philosophy, its distinctness from other branches of scientific investigation may be properly vindicated, it is easy to see that, from the nature of its subject-matter, it is intimately and, indeed, inseparably connected with one branch of science. For it is obviously impossible to answer the question, What can we know? unless, in the first place, there is a clear understanding as to what is meant by knowledge; and, having settled this point, the next step is to inquire how we come by that which we allow to be knowledge; for, upon the reply, turns the answer to the further question, whether, from the nature of the case, there are limits to the knowable or not. While, finally, inasmuch as What can I know? not only refers to knowledge of the past or of the present, but to the confident expectation which we call knowledge of the future; it is necessary to ask, further, what justification can be alleged for trusting to the guidance of our expectations in practical conduct.

It surely needs no argumentation to show, that the first problem cannot be approached without the examination of the contents of the mind; and the determination of how much of these contents may be called knowledge. Nor can the second problem be dealt with in any other fashion; for it is only by the observation of the growth of knowledge that we can rationally hope to discover how knowledge grows. But the solution of the

third problem simply involves the discussion of the data obtained by the investigation of the foregoing two.

Thus, in order to answer three out of the four subordinate questions into which What can I know? breaks up, we must have recourse to that investigation of mental phenomena, the results of which are embodied in the science of psychology.

Psychology is a part of the science of life or biology, which differs from the other branches of that science, merely in so far as it deals with the psychical, instead of the physical, phenomena of life.

As there is an anatomy of the body, so there is an anatomy of the mind; the psychologist dissects mental phenomena into elementary states of consciousness, as the anatomist resolves limbs into tissues, and tissues into cells. The one traces the development of complex organs from simple rudiments; the other follows the building up of complex conceptions out of simpler constituents of thought. As the physiologist inquires into the way in which the so-called "functions" of the body are performed, so the psychologist studies the so-called "faculties" of the mind. Even a cursory attention to the ways and works of the lower animals suggests a comparative anatomy and physiology of the mind; and the doctrine of evolution presses for application as much in the one field as in the other.

But there is more than a parallel, there is a close and intimate connexion between psychology and physiology. No one doubts that, at any rate, some mental states are dependent for their existence on the performance of the functions of particular bodily organs. There is no seeing without eyes, and no hearing without ears. If the origin of the contents of the mind is truly a philosophical

problem, then the philosopher who attempts to deal with that problem, without acquainting himself with the physiology of sensation, has no more intelligent conception of his business than the physiologist, who thinks he can discuss locomotion, without an acquaintance with the principles of mechanics; or respiration, without some tincture of chemistry.

On whatever ground we term physiology, science, psychology is entitled to the same appellation; and the method of investigation which elucidates the true relations of the one set of phenomena will discover those of the other. Hence, as philosophy is, in great measure, the exponent of the logical consequences of certain data established by psychology; and as psychology itself differs from physical science only in the nature of its subject-matter, and not in its method of investigation, it would seem to be an obvious conclusion, that philosophers are likely to be successful in their inquiries, in proportion as they are familiar with the application of scientific method to less abstruse subjects; just as it seems to require no elaborate demonstration, that an astronomer, who wishes to comprehend the solar system, would do well to acquire a preliminary acquaintance with the elements of physics. And it is accordant with this presumption, that the men who have made the most important positive additions to philosophy, such as Descartes, Spinoza, and Kant, not to mention more recent examples, have been deeply imbued with the spirit of physical science; and, in some cases, such as those of Descartes and Kant, have been largely acquainted with its details. On the other hand, the founder of Positivism no less admirably illustrates the connexion of scientific incapacity with philosophical incompetence. In truth,

the laboratory is the fore-court of the temple of philosophy; and whoso has not offered sacrifices and undergone purification there, has little chance of admission into the sanctuary.

Obvious as these considerations may appear to be, it would be wrong to ignore the fact that their force is by no means universally admitted. On the contrary, the necessity for a proper psychological and physiological training to the student of philosophy is denied, on the one hand, by the "pure metaphysicians," who attempt to base the theory of knowing upon supposed necessary and universal truths, and assert that scientific observation is impossible unless such truths are already known or implied: which, to those who are not "pure metaphysicians," seems very much as if one should say that the fall of a stone cannot be observed, unless the law of gravitation is already in the mind of the observer.

On the other hand, the Positivists, so far as they accept the teachings of their master, roundly assert, at any rate in words, that observation of the mind is a thing inherently impossible in itself, and that psychology is a chimera—a phantasm generated by the fermentation of the dregs of theology. Nevertheless, if M. Comte had been asked what he meant by "physiologie cérébrale," except that which other people call "psychology;" and how he knew anything about the functions of the brain, except by that very "observation intérieure," which he declares to be an absurdity—it seems probable that he would have found it hard to escape the admission, that, in vilipending psychology, he had been propounding solemn nonsense.

It is assuredly one of Hume's greatest merits that he clearly recognised the fact that philosophy is based upon

psychology; and that the inquiry into the contents and the operations of the mind must be conducted upon the same principles as a physical investigation, if what he calls the "moral philosopher" would attain results of as firm and definite a character as those which reward the "natural philosopher."[1] The title of his first work, a "*Treatise of Human Nature, being an Attempt to introduce the Experimental method of Reasoning into Moral Subjects*," sufficiently indicates the point of view from which Hume regarded philosophical problems; and he tells us in the preface, that his object has been to promote the construction of a "science of man."

"'Tis evident that all the sciences have a relation, greater or less, to human nature; and that, however wide any of them may seem to run from it, they still return back by one passage or another. Even *Mathematics, Natural Philosophy*, and *Natural Religion* are in some measure dependent on the science of MAN; since they lie under the cognizance of men, and are judged of by their powers and qualities. 'Tis impossible to tell what changes and improvements we might make in these sciences were we thoroughly acquainted with the extent and force of human understanding, and could explain the nature of the ideas we employ and of the operations we perform in our reasonings To me it seems evident that the essence of mind being equally unknown to us with that of external bodies, it must be equally impossible to form any notion of its powers and qualities otherwise than from careful and exact experiments, and the observation

[1] In a letter to Hutcheson (September 17th, 1739) Hume remarks:—"There are different ways of examining the mind as well as the body. One may consider it either as an anatomist or as a painter: either to discover its most secret springs and principles, or to describe the grace and beauty of its actions;" and he proceeds to justify his own mode of looking at the moral sentiments from the anatomist's point of view.

of those particular effects which result from its different circumstances and situations. And though we must endeavour to render all our principles as universal as possible, by tracing up our experiments to the utmost, and explaining all effects from the simplest and fewest causes, 'tis still certain we cannot go beyond experience; and any hypothesis that pretends to discover the ultimate original qualities of human nature, ought at first to be rejected as presumptuous and chimerical.

"But if this impossibility of explaining ultimate principles should be esteemed a defect in the science of man, I will venture to affirm, that it is a defect common to it with all the sciences, and all the arts, in which we can employ ourselves, whether they be such as are cultivated in the schools of the philosophers, or practised in the shops of the meanest artisans. None of them can go beyond experience, or establish any principles which are not founded on that authority. Moral philosophy has, indeed, this peculiar disadvantage, which is not found in natural, that in collecting its experiments, it cannot make them purposely, with premeditation, and after such a manner as to satisfy itself concerning every particular difficulty which may arise. When I am at a loss to know the effects of one body upon another in any situation, I need only put them in that situation, and observe what results from it. But should I endeavour to clear up in the same manner any [1] doubt in moral philosophy, by placing myself in the same case with that which I consider, 'tis evident this reflection and premeditation would so disturb the operation of my natural principles, as must render it impossible to form any just conclusion from the phenomenon. We must, therefore, glean up our experiments in this science from a cautious observation of human life, and take them as they appear in the common course of the world, by men's behaviour in company, in affairs, and in their pleasures. Where experiments of this kind are judiciously collected and compared, we may

[1] The manner in which Hume constantly refers to the results of the observation of the contents and the processes of his own mind clearly shows that he has here inadvertently overstated the case.

hope to establish on them a science which will not be inferior in certainty, and will be much superior in utility, to any other of human comprehension."—(I. pp. 7—11.)

All science starts with hypotheses—in other words, with assumptions that are unproved, while they may be, and often are, erroneous; but which are better than nothing to the seeker after order in the maze of phenomena. And the historical progress of every science depends on the criticism of hypotheses—on the gradual stripping off, that is, of their untrue or superfluous parts—until there remains only that exact verbal expression of as much as we know of the fact, and no more, which constitutes a perfect scientific theory.

Philosophy has followed the same course as other branches of scientific investigation. The memorable service rendered to the cause of sound thinking by Descartes consisted in this: that he laid the foundation of modern philosophical criticism by his inquiry into the nature of certainty. It is a clear result of the investigation started by Descartes, that there is one thing of which no doubt can be entertained, for he who should pretend to doubt it would thereby prove its existence; and that is the momentary consciousness we call a present thought or feeling; that is safe, even if all other kinds of certainty are merely more or less probable inferences. Berkeley and Locke, each in his way, applied philosophical criticism in other directions; but they always, at any rate professedly, followed the Cartesian maxim of admitting no propositions to be true but such as are clear, distinct, and evident, even while their arguments stripped off many a layer of hypothetical assumption which their great predecessor had left untouched.

No one has more clearly stated the aims of the critical philosopher than Locke, in a passage of the famous *Essay concerning Human Understanding*, which, perhaps, I ought to assume to be well known to all English readers, but which so probably is unknown to this full-crammed and much-examined generation that I venture to cite it:

"If by this inquiry into the nature of the understanding I can discover the powers thereof, how far they reach, to what things they are in any degree proportionate, and where they fail us, I suppose it may be of use to prevail with the busy mind of man to be more cautious in meddling with things exceeding its comprehension: to stop when it is at the utmost extent of its tether; and to sit down in quiet ignorance of those things which, upon examination, are proved to be beyond the reach of our capacities. We should not then, perhaps, be so forward, out of an affectation of universal knowledge, to raise questions and perplex ourselves and others with disputes about things to which our understandings are not suited, and of which we cannot frame in our minds any clear and distinct perception, or whereof (as it has, perhaps, too often happened) we have not any notion at all Men may find matter sufficient to busy their heads and employ their hands with variety, delight, and satisfaction, if they will not boldly quarrel with their own constitution and throw away the blessings their hands are filled with because they are not big enough to grasp everything. We shall not have much reason to complain of the narrowness of our minds, if we will but employ them about what may be of use to us: for of that they are very capable: and it will be an unpardonable, as well as a childish peevishness, if we undervalue the advantages of our knowledge, and neglect to improve it to the ends for which it was given us, because there are some things that are set out of the reach of it. It will be no excuse to an idle and untoward servant who would not attend to his business by candlelight, to plead that he had not broad sunshine. The candle that is set up in us shines bright

enough for all our purposes Our business here is not to know all things, but those which concern our conduct."[1]

Hume develops the same fundamental conception in a somewhat different way, and with a more definite indication of the practical benefits which may be expected from a critical philosophy. The first and second parts of the twelfth section of the *Inquiry* are devoted to a condemnation of excessive scepticism, or Pyrrhonism, with which Hume couples a caricature of the Cartesian doubt; but, in the third part, a certain "mitigated scepticism" is recommended and adopted, under the title of "academical philosophy." After pointing out that a knowledge of the infirmities of the human understanding, even in its most perfect state, and when most accurate and cautious in its determinations, is the best check upon the tendency to dogmatism, Hume continues :—

"Another species of *mitigated* scepticism, which may be of advantage to mankind, and which may be the natural result of the PYRRHONIAN doubts and scruples, is the limitation of our inquiries to such subjects as are best adapted to the narrow capacity of human understanding. The *imagination* of man is naturally sublime, delighted with whatever is remote and extraordinary, and running, without control, into the most distant parts of space and time in order to avoid the objects which custom has rendered too familiar to it. A correct *judgment* observes a contrary method, and, avoiding all distant and high inquiries, confines itself to common life, and to such subjects as fall under daily practice and experience; leaving the more sublime topics to the embellishment of poets and orators, or to the arts of priests and politicians. To bring us to so salutary a determination, nothing can be more

[1] Locke, *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*, Book I. chap. i. §§ 4, 5, 6.

serviceable than to be once thoroughly convinced of the force of the PYRRHONIAN doubt, and of the impossibility that anything but the strong power of natural instinct could free us from it. Those who have a propensity to philosophy will still continue their researches; because they reflect, that, besides the immediate pleasure attending such an occupation, philosophical decisions are nothing but the reflections of common life, methodised and corrected. But they will never be tempted to go beyond common life, so long as they consider the imperfection of those faculties which they employ, their narrow reach, and their inaccurate operations. While we cannot give a satisfactory reason why we believe, after a thousand experiments, that a stone will fall or fire burn; can we ever satisfy ourselves concerning any determination which we may form with regard to the origin of worlds and the situation of nature from and to eternity?" (IV. pp. 189—90.)

But further, it is the business of criticism not only to keep watch over the vagaries of philosophy, but to do the duty of police in the whole world of thought. Wherever it espies sophistry or superstition they are to be bidden to stand; nay, they are to be followed to their very dens and there apprehended and exterminated, as Othello smothered Desdemona, "else she'll betray more men."

Hume warms into eloquence as he sets forth the labours meet for the strength and the courage of the Hercules of "mitigated scepticism."

"Here, indeed, lies the justest and most plausible objection against a considerable part of metaphysics, that they are not properly a science, but arise either from the fruitless efforts of human vanity, which would penetrate into subjects utterly inaccessible to the understanding, or from the craft of popular superstitions, which, being unable to defend themselves on fair ground, raise these entangling brambles to cover and

protect their weakness. Chased from the open country, these robbers fly into the forest, and lie in wait to break in upon every unguarded avenue of the mind and overwhelm it with religious fears and prejudices. The stoutest antagonist, if he remits his watch a moment, is oppressed ; and many, through cowardice and folly, open the gates to the enemies, and willingly receive them with reverence and submission as their legal soveregins.

"But is this a sufficient reason why philosophers should desist from such researches and leave superstition still in possession of her retreat? Is it not proper to draw an opposite conclusion, and perceive the necessity of carrying the war into the most secret recesses of the enemy? The only method of freeing learning at once from these abstruse questions, is to inquire seriously into the nature of human understanding, and show, from an exact analysis of its powers and capacity, that it is by no means fitted for such remote and abstruse subjects. We must submit to this fatigue, in order to live at ease ever after ; and must cultivate true metaphysics with some care, in order to destroy the false and adulterated." (IV. pp. 10, 11.)

Near a century and a half has elapsed since these brave words were shaped by David Hume's pen ; and the business of carrying the war into the enemy's camp has gone on but slowly. Like other campaigns, it long languished for want of a good base of operations. But since physical science, in the course of the last fifty years, has brought to the front an inexhaustible supply of heavy artillery of a new pattern, warranted to drive solid bolts of fact through the thickest skulls, things are looking better ; though hardly more than the first faint flutterings of the dawn of the happy day, when superstition and false metaphysics shall be no more and reasonable folks may "live at ease," are as yet discernible by the *enfants perdus* of the outposts.

If, in thus conceiving the object and the limitations of philosophy, Hume shows himself the spiritual child and continuator of the work of Locke, he appears no less plainly as the parent of Kant and as the protagonist of that more modern way of thinking, which has been called "agnosticism," from its profession of an incapacity to discover the indispensable conditions of either positive or negative knowledge, in many propositions, respecting which, not only the vulgar, but philosophers of the more sanguine sort, revel in the luxury of unqualified assurance.

The aim of the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* is essentially the same as that of the *Treatise of Human Nature*, by which indeed Kant was led to develop that "critical philosophy" with which his name and fame are indissolubly bound up: and, if the details of Kant's criticism differ from those of Hume, they coincide with them in their main result, which is the limitation of all knowledge of reality to the world of phenomena revealed to us by experience.

The philosopher of Königsberg epitomises the philosopher of Ninewells when he thus sums up the uses of philosophy:—

"The greatest and perhaps the sole use of all philosophy of pure reason is, after all, merely negative, since it serves, not as an organon for the enlargement [of knowledge], but as a discipline for its delimitation; and instead of discovering truth, has only the modest merit of preventing error."[1]

[1] *Kritik der reinen Vernunft.* Ed. Hartenstein, p. 256.

CHAPTER II.

THE CONTENTS OF THE MIND.

In the language of common life, the "mind" is spoken of as an entity, independent of the body, though resident in and closely connected with it, and endowed with numerous "faculties," such as sensibility, understanding, memory, volition, which stand in the same relation to the mind as the organs do to the body, and perform the functions of feeling, reasoning, remembering, and willing. Of these functions, some, such as sensation, are supposed to be merely passive—that is, they are called into existence by impressions, made upon the sensitive faculty by a material world of real objects, of which our sensations are supposed to give us pictures; others, such as the memory and the reasoning faculty, are considered to be partly passive and partly active; while volition is held to be potentially, if not always actually, a spontaneous activity.

The popular classification and terminology of the phenomena of consciousness, however, are by no means the first crude conceptions suggested by common sense, but rather a legacy, and, in many respects, a sufficiently *damnosa hæreditas*, of ancient philosophy, more or less

leavened by theology; which has incorporated itself with the common thought of later times, as the vices of the aristocracy of one age become those of the mob in the next. Very little attention to what passes in the mind is sufficient to show, that these conceptions involve assumptions of an extremely hypothetical character. And the first business of the student of psychology is to get rid of such prepossessions; to form conceptions of mental phenomena as they are given us by observation, without any hypothetical admixture, or with only so much as is definitely recognised and held subject to confirmation or otherwise; to classify these phenomena according to their clearly recognisable characters; and to adopt a nomenclature which suggests nothing beyond the results of observation. Thus chastened, observation of the mind makes us acquainted with nothing but certain events, facts, or phenomena (whichever name be preferred) which pass over the inward field of view in rapid and, as it may appear on careless inspection, in disorderly succession, like the shifting patterns of a kaleidoscope. To all these mental phenomena, or states of our consciousness,[1] Descartes gave the name of "thoughts," [2] while Locke

[1] "Consciousnesses" would be a better name, but it is awkward. I have elsewhere proposed *psychoses* as a substantive name for mental phenomena.

[2] As this has been denied, it may be as well to give Descartes's words: "Par le mot de penser, j'entends tout ce que se fait dans nous de telle sorte que nous l'apercevons immédiatement par nous-mêmes: c'est pourquoi non-seulement entendre, vouloir, imaginer, mais aussi sentir, c'est le même chose ici que penser."—*Principes de Philosophie.* Ed. Cousin. 57.

"Toutes les propriétés que nous trouvons en la chose qui pense ne sont que des façons différentes de penser."—*Ibid.* 96.

and Berkeley termed them "ideas." Hume, regarding this as an improper use of the word "idea," for which he proposes another employment, gives the general name of "perceptions" to all states of consciousness. Thus, whatever other signification we may see reason to attach to the word "mind," it is certain that it is a name which is employed to denote a series of perceptions; just as the word "tune," whatever else it may mean, denotes, in the first place, a succession of musical notes. Hume, indeed, goes further than others when he says that—

"What we call a mind is nothing but a heap or collection of different perceptions, united together by certain relations, and supposed, though falsely, to be endowed with a perfect simplicity and identity."—(I. p. 268.)

With this "nothing but," however, he obviously falls into the primal and perennial error of philosophical speculators—dogmatising from negative arguments. He may be right or wrong; but the most he, or anybody else, can prove in favour of his conclusion is, that we know nothing more of the mind than that it is a series of perceptions. Whether there is something in the mind that lies beyond the reach of observation; or whether perceptions themselves are the products of something which can be observed and which is not mind; are questions which can in nowise be settled by direct observation. Elsewhere, the objectionable hypothetical element of the definition of mind is less prominent:—

"The true idea of the human mind is to consider it as a system of different perceptions, or different existences, which

are linked together by the relation of cause and effect, and mutually produce, destroy, influence and modify each other. . . . In this respect I cannot compare the soul more properly to anything than a republic or commonwealth, in which the several members are united by the reciprocal ties of government and subordination, and give rise to other persons who propagate the same republic in the incessant changes of its parts."—(I. p. 331).

But, leaving the question of the proper definition of mind open for the present, it is further a matter of direct observation, that, when we take a general survey of all our perceptions or states of consciousness, they naturally fall into sundry groups or classes. Of these classes, two are distinguished by Hume as of primary importance. All "perceptions," he says, are either "*Impressions*" or "*Ideas.*"

Under "impressions" he includes "all our more lively perceptions, when we hear, see, feel, love, or will;" in other words, "all our sensations, passions, and emotions, as they make their first appearance in the soul" (I. p. 15).

"Ideas," on the other hand, are the faint images of impressions in thinking and reasoning, or of antecedent ideas.

Both impressions and ideas may be either *simple*, when they are incapable of further analysis, or *complex*, when they may be resolved into simpler constituents. All simple ideas are exact copies of impressions; but, in complex ideas, the arrangement of simple constituents may be different from that of the impressions of which those simple ideas are copies.

Thus the colours red and blue and the odour of a rose, are simple impressions; while the ideas of blue, of red,

and of rose-odour are simple copies of these impressions. But a red rose gives us a complex impression, capable of resolution into the simple impressions of red colour, rose-scent, and numerous others; and we may have a complex idea, which is an accurate, though faint, copy of this complex impression. Once in possession of the ideas of a red rose and of the colour blue, we may, in imagination, substitute blue for red; and thus obtain a complex idea of a blue rose, which is not an actual copy of any complex impression, though all its elements are such copies.

Hume has been criticised for making the distinction of impressions and ideas to depend upon their relative strength or vivacity. Yet it would be hard to point out any other character by which the things signified can be distinguished. Any one who has paid attention to the curious subject of what are called "subjective sensations" will be familiar with examples of the extreme difficulty which sometimes attends the discrimination of ideas of sensation from impressions of sensation, when the ideas are very vivid, or the impressions are faint. Who has not "fancied" he heard a noise; or has not explained inattention to a real sound by saying, "I thought it was nothing but my fancy"? Even healthy persons are much more liable to both visual and auditory spectra—that is, ideas of vision and sound so vivid that they are taken for new impressions—than is commonly supposed; and, in some diseased states, ideas of sensible objects may assume all the vividness of reality.

If ideas are nothing but copies of impressions, arranged, either in the same order as that of the impressions from which they are derived, or in a different order, it follows that the ultimate analysis of the contents of

the mind turns upon that of the impressions. According to Hume, these are of two kinds : either they are impressions of sensation, or they are impressions of reflection. The former are those afforded by the five senses, together with pleasure and pain. The latter are the passions or the emotions (which Hume employs as equivalent terms). Thus the elementary states of consciousness, the raw materials of knowledge, so to speak, are either sensations or emotions ; and whatever we discover in the mind, beyond these elementary states of consciousness, results from the combinations and the metamorphoses which they undergo.

It is not a little strange that a thinker of Hume's capacity should have been satisfied with the results of a psychological analysis which regards some obvious compounds as elements, while it omits altogether a most important class of elementary states.

With respect to the former point, Spinoza's masterly examination of the Passions in the third part of the *Ethics* should have been known to Hume.[1] But, if he had been acquainted with that wonderful piece of psychological anatomy, he would have learned that the emotions and passions are all complex states, arising from the close association of ideas of pleasure or pain with other ideas ; and, indeed, without going to Spinoza, his own acute discussion of the passions leads to the same result,[2] and is wholly inconsistent with his classi-

[1] On the whole, it is pleasant to find satisfactory evidence that Hume knew nothing of the works of Spinoza ; for the invariably abusive manner in which he refers to that type of the philosophic hero is only to be excused, if it is to be excused, by sheer ignorance of his life and work.

[2] For example, in discussing pride and humility, Hume says :—

fication of those mental states among the primary uncompounded materials of consciousness.

If Hume's "impressions of reflection" are excluded from among the primary elements of consciousness, nothing is left but the impressions afforded by the five senses, with pleasure and pain. Putting aside the muscular sense, which had not come into view in Hume's time, the questions arise whether these are all the simple undecomposable materials of thought? or whether others exist of which Hume take no cognizance.

Kant answered the latter question in the affirmative, in the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, and thereby made one of the greatest advances ever effected in philosophy; though it must be confessed that the German philosopher's exposition of his views is so perplexed in style, so burdened with the weight of a cumbrous and uncouth scholasticism, that it is easy to confound the unessential parts of his system with those which are of profound importance. His baggage train is bigger than his army, and the student who attacks him is too often led to suspect he has won a position when he has only captured a mob of useless camp-followers.

In his *Principles of Psychology*, Mr. Herbert Spencer appears to me to have brought out the essential truth

"According as our idea of ourselves is more or less advantageous, we feel either of these opposite affections, and are elated by pride or dejected with humility . . . when self enters not into the consideration there is no room either for pride or humility." That is, pride is pleasure, and humility is pain, associated with certain conceptions of one's self; or, as Spinoza puts it:—"Superbia est de se præ amore sui plus justo sentire" ("amor" being "lætitia concomitante idea causæ externæ"); and "Humilitas est tristitia orta ex eo quod homo suam impotentiam sive imbecillitatem contemplatur."

which underlies Kant's doctrine in a far clearer manner than any one else; but, for the purpose of the present summary view of Hume's philosophy, it must suffice if I state the matter in my own way, giving the broad outlines, without entering into the details of a large and difficult discussion.

When a red light flashes across the field of vision, there arises in the mind an "impression of sensation" —which we call red. It appears to me that this sensation, red, is a something which may exist altogether independently of any other impression, or idea, as an individual existence. It is perfectly conceivable that a sentient being should have no sense but vision, and that he should have spent his existence in absolute darkness, with the exception of one solitary flash of red light. That momentary illumination would suffice to give him the impression under consideration; and the whole content of his consciousness might be that impression; and, if he were endowed with memory, its idea.

Such being the state of affairs, suppose a second flash of red light to follow the first. If there were no memory of the latter, the state of the mind on the second occasion would simply be a repetition of that which occurred before. There would be merely another impression.

But suppose memory to exist, and that an idea of the first impression is generated; then, if the supposed sentient being were like ourselves, there might arise in his mind two altogether new impressions. The one is the feeling of the *succession* of the two impressions, the other is the feeling of their *similarity*.

Yet a third case is conceivable. Suppose two flashes

of red light to occur together, then a third feeling might arise which is neither succession nor similarity, but that which we call *co-existence.*

These feelings, or their contraries, are the foundation of everything that we call a relation. They are no more capable of being described than sensations are; and, as it appears to me, they are as little susceptible of analysis into simpler elements. Like simple tastes and smells, or feelings of pleasure and pain, they are ultimate irresolvable facts of conscious experience; and, if we follow the principle of Hume's nomenclature, they must be called *impressions of relation.* But it must be remembered, that they differ from the other impressions, in requiring the pre-existence of at least two of the latter. Though devoid of the slightest resemblance to the other impressions, they are, in a manner, generated by them. In fact, we may regard them as a kind of impressions of impressions; or as the sensations of an inner sense, which takes cognizance of the materials furnished to it by the outer senses.

Hume failed as completely as his predecessors had done to recognise the elementary character of impressions of relation; and, when he discusses relations, he falls into a chaos of confusion and self-contradiction.

In the *Treatise*, for example, (Book I., § iv.) resemblance, contiguity in time and space, and cause and effect, are said to be the "uniting principles among ideas," "the bond of union" or "associating quality by which one idea naturally introduces another." Hume affirms that—

"These qualities produce an association among ideas, and upon the appearance of one idea naturally introduce another." They are "the principles of union or cohesion among our

simple ideas, and, in the imagination, supply the place of that inseparable connection by which they are united in our memory. Here is a kind of *attraction*, which, in the mental world, will be found to have as extraordinary effects as in the natural, and to show itself in as many and as various forms. Its effects are everywhere conspicuous ; but, as to its causes they are mostly unknown, and must be resolved into *original* qualities of human nature, which I pretend not to explain."—(I. p. 29.)

And at the end of this section Hume goes on to say—

"Amongst the effects of this union or association of ideas, there are none more remarkable than those complex ideas which are the common subjects of our thought and reasoning, and generally arise from some principle of union among our simple ideas. These complex ideas may be resolved into *relations*, *modes*, and *substances*."—(*Ibid.*)

In the next section, which is devoted to *Relations*, they are spoken of as qualities "by which two ideas are connected together in the imagination," or "which make objects admit of comparison," and seven kinds of relation are enumerated, namely, *resemblance*, *identity*, *space and time*, *quantity or number*, *degrees of quality*, *contrariety*, and *cause and effect*.

To the reader of Hume, whose conceptions are usually so clear, definite, and consistent, it is as unsatisfactory as it is surprising to meet with so much questionable and obscure phraseology in a small space. One and the same thing, for example, resemblance, is first called a "quality of an idea," and secondly a "complex idea." Surely it cannot be both. Ideas which have the qualities of "resemblance, contiguity, and cause and effect," are said to "attract one another" (save the mark !), and so become

associated; though, in a subsequent part of the *Treatise*, Hume's great effort is to prove that the relation of cause and effect is a particular case of the process of association; that is to say, is a result of the process of which it is supposed to be the cause. Moreover, since, as Hume is never weary of reminding his readers, there is nothing in ideas save copies of impressions, the qualities of resemblance, contiguity, and so on, in the idea, must have existed in the impression of which that idea is a copy; and therefore they must be either sensations or emotions —from both of which classes they are excluded.

In fact, in one place, Hume himself has an insight into the real nature of relations. Speaking of equality, in the sense of a relation of quantity, he says—

> "Since equality is a relation, it is not, strictly speaking, a property in the figures themselves, but arises merely from the comparison which the mind makes between them."—(I. p. 70.)

That is to say, when two impressions of equal figures are present, there arises in the mind a *tertium quid*, which is the perception of equality. On his own principles, Hume should therefore have placed this "perception" among the ideas of reflection. However, as we have seen, he expressly excludes everything but the emotions and the passions from this group.

It is necessary therefore to amend Hume's primary "geography of the mind" by the excision of one territory and the addition of another; and the elementary states of consciousness will stand thus:—

A. Impressions.

a. Sensations of

a. Smell.

b. Taste.

c. Hearing.
d. Sight.
e. Touch.
f. Resistance (the muscular sense).

B. Pleasure and Pain.

C. Relations.

a. Co-existence.
b. Succession.
c. Similarity and dissimilarity.

B. IDEAS.

Copies, or reproductions in memory, of the foregoing.

And now the question arises, whether any, and if so what, portion of these contents of the mind are to be termed "knowledge."

According to Locke, "Knowledge is the perception of the agreement or disagreement of two ideas;" and Hume, though he does not say so in so many words, tacitly accepts the definition. It follows, that neither simple sensation, nor simple emotion, constitutes knowledge; but that, when impressions of relation are added to these impressions, or their ideas, knowledge arises; and that all knowledge is the knowledge of likenesses and unlikenesses, co-existences and successions.

It really matters very little in what sense terms are used, so long as the same meaning is always rigidly attached to them; and, therefore, it is hardly worth while to quarrel with this generally accepted, though very arbitrary, limitation of the signification of "knowledge." But, on the face of the matter, it is not obvious why the impression we call a relation should have a better claim to the title of knowledge, than that which we call a sensation or an emotion; and the restriction has this

unfortunate result, that it excludes all the most intense states of consciousness from any claim to the title of "knowledge."

For example, on this view, pain, so violent and absorbing as to exclude all other forms of consciousness, is not knowledge; but becomes a part of knowledge the moment we think of it in relation to another pain, or to some other mental phenomenon. Surely this is somewhat inconvenient, for there is only a verbal difference between having a sensation and knowing one has it: they are simply two phrases for the same mental state.

But the "pure metaphysicians" make great capital out of the ambiguity. For, starting with the assumption that all knowledge is the perception of relations, and finding themselves, like mere common-sense folks, very much disposed to call sensation knowledge, they at once gratify that disposition and save their consistency, by declaring that even the simplest act of sensation contains two terms and a relation—the sensitive subject, the sensigenous object, and that masterful entity, the Ego. From which great triad, as from a gnostic Trinity, emanates an endless procession of other logical shadows and all the *Fata Morgana* of philosophical dreamland.

CHAPTER III.

THE ORIGIN OF THE IMPRESSIONS.

ADMITTING that the sensations, the feelings of pleasure and pain, and those of relation, are the primary irresolvable states of consciousness, two further lines of investigation present themselves. The one leads us to seek the origin of these "impressions;" the other, to inquire into the nature of the steps by which they become metamorphosed into those compound states of consciousness, which so largely enter into our ordinary trains of thought.

With respect to the origin of impressions of sensation, Hume is not quite consistent with himself. In one place (I. p. 117) he says, that it is impossible to decide "whether they arise immediately from the object, or are produced by the creative power of the mind, or are derived from the Author of our being," thereby implying that realism and idealism are equally probable hypotheses. But, in fact, after the demonstration by Descartes, that the immediate antecedents of sensations are changes in the nervous system, with which our feelings have no sort of resemblance, the hypothesis that sensations "arise immediately from the object" was out of court;

and that Hume fully admitted the Cartesian doctrine is apparent when he says (1. p. 272) :—

"All our perceptions are dependent on our organs and the disposition of our nerves and animal spirits."

And again, though in relation to another question, he observes :—

"There are three different kinds of impressions conveyed by the senses. The first are those of the figure, bulk, motion, and solidity of bodies. The second those of colours, tastes, smells, sounds, heat, and cold. The third are the pains and pleasures that arise from the application of objects to our bodies, as by the cutting of our flesh with steel, and such like. Both philosophers and the vulgar suppose the first of these to have a distinct continued existence. The vulgar only regard the second as on the same footing. Both philosophers and the vulgar again esteem the third to be merely perceptions, and consequently interrupted and dependent beings.

"Now 'tis evident that, whatever may be our philosophical opinion, colour, sounds, heat, and cold, as far as appears to the senses, exist after the same manner with motion and solidity; and that the difference we make between them, in this respect, arises not from the mere perception. So strong is the prejudice for the distinct continued existence of the former qualities, that when the contrary opinion is advanced by modern philosophers, people imagine they can almost refute it from their reason and experience, and that their very senses contradict this philosophy. 'Tis also evident that colours, sounds, &c., are originally on the same footing with the pain that arises from steel, and pleasure that proceeds from a fire; and that the difference betwixt them is founded neither on perception nor reason, but on the imagination. For as they are confessed to be, both of them, nothing but perceptions arising from the particular configurations and motions of the parts of body, wherein possibly can their difference consist? Upon the whole, then, we may conclude that, as far as

the senses are judges, all perceptions are the same in the manner of their existence."—(I. p. 250, 251.)

The last words of this passage are as much Berkeley's as Hume's. But, instead of following Berkeley in his deductions from the position thus laid down, Hume, as the preceding citation shows, fully adopted the conclusion to which all that we know of psychological physiology tends, that the origin of the elements of consciousness, no less than that of all its other states, is to be sought in bodily changes, the seat of which can only be placed in the brain. And, as Locke had already done with less effect, he states and refutes the arguments commonly brought against the possibility of a causal connexion between the modes of motion of the cerebral substance and states of consciousness, with great clearness :—

"From these hypotheses concerning the *substance* and *local conjunction* of our perceptions we may pass to another, which is more intelligible than the former, and more important than the latter, viz. concerning the *cause* of our perceptions. Matter and motion, 'tis commonly said in the schools, however varied, are still matter and motion, and produce only a difference in the position and situation of objects. Divide a body as often as you please, 'tis still body. Place it in any figure, nothing ever results but figure, or the relation of parts. Move it in any manner, you still find motion or a change of relation. 'Tis absurd to imagine that motion in a circle, for instance, should be nothing but merely motion in a circle; while motion in another direction, as in an ellipse, should also be a passion or moral reflection; that the shocking of two globular particles should become a sensation of pain, and that the meeting of the triangular ones should afford a pleasure. Now as these different shocks and variations and mixtures are the only changes of which matter is

susceptible, and as these never afford us any idea of thought or perception, 'tis concluded to be impossible, that thought can ever be caused by matter.

"Few have been able to withstand the seeming evidence of this argument; and yet nothing in the world is more easy than to refute it. We need only reflect upon what has been proved at large, that we are never sensible of any connexion between causes and effects, and that 'tis only by our experience of their constant conjunction we can arrive at any knowledge of this relation. Now, as all objects which are not contrary are susceptible of a constant conjunction, and as no real objects are contrary, I have inferred from these principles (Part III. § 15) that, to consider the matter *a priori*, anything may produce anything, and that we shall never discover a reason why any object may or may not be the cause of any other, however great, or however little, the resemblance may be betwixt them. This evidently destroys the precedent reasoning, concerning the cause of thought or perception. For though there appear no manner of connection betwixt motion and thought, the case is the same with all other causes and effects. Place one body of a pound weight on one end of a lever, and another body of the same weight on the other end; you will never find in these bodies any principle of motion dependent on their distance from the centre, more than of thought and perception. If you pretend, therefore, to prove, *a priori*, that such a position of bodies can never cause thought, because, turn it which way you will, it is nothing but a position of bodies: you must, by the same course of reasoning, conclude that it can never produce motion, since there is no more apparent connection in the one than in the other. But, as this latter conclusion is contrary to evident experience, and as 'tis possible we may have a like experience in the operations of the mind, and may perceive a constant conjunction of thought and motion, you reason too hastily when, from the mere consideration of the ideas, you conclude that 'tis impossible motion can ever produce thought, or a different position of parts give rise to a different passion or reflection. Nay, 'tis not only possible we may have such

an experience, but 'tis certain we have it; since every one may perceive that the different dispositions of his body change his thoughts and sentiments. And should it be said that this depends on the union of soul and body, I would answer, that we must separate the question concerning the substance of the mind from that concerning the cause of its thought; and that, confining ourselves to the latter question, we find, by the comparing their ideas, that thought and motion are different from each other and by experience, that they are constantly united; which, being all the circumstances that enter into the idea of cause and effect, when applied to the operations of matter, we may certainly conclude that motion may be, and actually is, the cause of thought and perception." —(I. pp. 314—316.)

The upshot of all this is, that the "collection of perceptions," which constitutes the mind, is really a system of effects, the causes of which are to be sought in antecedent changes of the matter of the brain, just as the "collection of motions," which we call flying, is a system of effects, the causes of which are to be sought in the modes of motion of the matter of the muscles of the wings.

Hume, however, treats of this important topic only incidentally. He seems to have had very little acquaintance even with such physiology as was current in his time. At least, the only passage of his works, bearing on this subject, with which I am acquainted, contains nothing but a very odd version of the physiological views of Descartes:—

"When I received the relations of *resemblance*, *contiguity*, and *causation*, as principles of union among ideas, without examining into their causes, 'twas more in prosecution of my first maxim, that we must in the end rest contented with experience, than for want of something specious and plausible which I might have displayed on that subject. 'Twould

have been easy to have made an imaginary dissection of the brain, and have shown why, upon our conception of any idea, the animal spirits run into all the contiguous traces and rouse up the other ideas that are related to it. But though I have neglected any advantage which I might have drawn from this topic in explaining the relations of ideas, I am afraid I must here have recourse to it, in order to account for the mistakes that arise from these relations. I shall therefore observe, that as the mind is endowed with the power of exciting any idea it pleases; whenever it despatches the spirits into that region of the brain in which the idea is placed; these spirits always excite the idea, when they run precisely into the proper traces and rummage that cell which belongs to the idea. But as their motion is seldom direct, and naturally turns a little to the one side or to the other; for this reason the animal spirits, falling into the contiguous traces, present other related ideas, in lieu of that which the mind desired at first to survey. This change we are not always sensible of; but continuing still the same train of thought, make use of the related idea which is presented to us and employ it in our reasonings, as if it were the same with what we demanded. This is the cause of many mistakes and sophisms in philosophy; as will naturally be imagined, and as it would be easy to show, if there was occasion."—(I. p. 88.)

Perhaps it is as well for Hume's fame that the occasion for further physiological speculations of this sort did not arise. But, while admitting the crudity of his notions and the strangeness of the language in which they are couched, it must in justice be remembered, that what are now known as the elements of the physiology of the nervous system were hardly dreamed of in the first half of the eighteenth century; and, as a further set off to Hume's credit, it must be noted that he grasped the fundamental truth, that the key to the comprehension of mental operations lies in the study of the molecular changes of the nervous apparatus by which they are originated.

Surely no one who is cognisant of the facts of the case, nowadays, doubts that the roots of psychology lie in the physiology of the nervous system. What we call the operations of the mind are functions of the brain, and the materials of consciousness are products of cerebral activity. Cabanis may have made use of crude and misleading phraseology when he said that the brain secretes thought as the liver secretes bile; but the conception which that much abused phrase embodies is, nevertheless, far more consistent with fact than the popular notion that the mind is a metaphysical entity seated in the head, but as independent of the brain as a telegraph operator is of his instrument.

It is hardly necessary to point out that the doctrine just laid down is what is commonly called materialism. In fact, I am not sure that the adjective "crass," which appears to have a special charm for rhetorical sciolists, would not be applied to it. But it is, nevertheless, true that the doctrine contains nothing inconsistent with the purest idealism. For, as Hume remarks (as indeed Descartes had observed long before):—

> "'Tis not our body we perceive when we regard our limbs and members, but certain impressions which enter by the senses; so that the ascribing a real and corporeal existence to these impressions, or to their objects, is an act of the mind as difficult to explain as that [the external existence of objects] which we examine at present."—(I. p. 249.)

Therefore, if we analyse the proposition that all mental phenomena are the effects or products of material phenomena, all that it means amounts to this; that whenever those states of consciousness which we call sensation, or emotion, or thought, come into existence,

complete investigation will show good reason for the belief that they are preceded by those other phenomena of consciousness to which we give the names of matter and motion. All material changes appear, in the long run, to be modes of motion; but our knowledge of motion is nothing but that of a change in the place and order of our sensations; just as our knowledge of matter is restricted to those feelings of which we assume it to be the cause.

It has already been pointed out, that Hume must have admitted, and in fact does admit, the possibility that the mind is a Leibnitzian monad, or a Fichtean world-generating Ego, the universe of things being merely the picture produced by the evolution of the phenomena of consciousness. For any demonstration that can be given to the contrary effect, the "collection of perceptions" which makes up our consciousness may be an orderly phantasmagoria generated by the Ego, unfolding its successive scenes on the background of the abyss of nothingness; as a firework, which is but cunningly arranged combustibles, grows from a spark into a coruscation, and from a coruscation into figures, and words, and cascades of devouring fire, and then vanishes into the darkness of the night.

On the other hand, it must no less readily be allowed that, for anything that can be proved to the contrary, there may be a real something which is the cause of all our impressions; that sensations, though not likenesses, are symbols of that something; and that the part of that something, which we call the nervous system, is an apparatus for supplying us with a sort of algebra of fact, based on those symbols. A brain may be the machinery by which the material universe

becomes conscious of itself. But it is important to notice that, even if this conception of the universe and of the relation of consciousness to its other components should be true, we should, nevertheless, be still bound by the limits of thought, still unable to refute the arguments of pure idealism. The more completely the materialistic position is admitted, the easier is it to show that the idealistic position is unassailable, if the idealist confines himself within the limits of positive knowledge.

Hume deals with the questions whether all our ideas are derived from experience, or whether, on the contrary, more or fewer of them are innate, which so much exercised the mind of Locke, after a somewhat summary fashion, in a note to the second section of the *Inquiry*:—

"It is probable that no more was meant by those who denied innate ideas, than that all ideas were copies of our impressions; though it must be confessed that the terms which they employed were not chosen with such caution, nor so exactly defined, as to prevent all mistakes about their doctrine. For what is meant by *innate*? If innate be equivalent to natural, then all the perceptions and ideas of the mind must be allowed to be innate or natural, in whatever sense we take the latter word, whether in opposition to what is uncommon, artificial, or miraculous. If by innate be meant contemporary with our birth, the dispute seems to be frivolous; nor is it worth while to inquire at what time thinking begins, whether before, at, or after our birth. Again, the word *idea* seems to be commonly taken in a very loose sense by Locke and others, as standing for any of our perceptions, our sensations and passions, as well as thoughts. Now in this sense I should desire to know what can be meant by asserting that self-love, or resentment of injuries, or the passion between the sexes is not innate?

"But admitting these terms, *impressions* and *ideas*, in the

sense above explained, and understanding by *innate* what is original or copied from no precedent perception, then we may assert that all our impressions are innate, and our ideas not innate."

It would seem that Hume did not think it worth while to acquire a comprehension of the real points at issue in the controversy which he thus carelessly dismisses.

Yet Descartes has defined what he means by innate ideas with so much precision, that misconception ought to have been impossible. He says that, when he speaks of an idea being "innate," he means that it exists potentially in the mind, before it is actually called into existence by whatever is its appropriate exciting cause.

"I have never either thought or said," he writes, "that the mind has any need of innate ideas [*idées naturelles*] which are anything distinct from its faculty of thinking. But it is true that observing that there are certain thoughts which arise neither from external objects nor from the determination of my will, but only from my faculty of thinking; in order to mark the difference between the ideas or the notions which are the forms of these thoughts, and to distinguish them from the others, which may be called extraneous or voluntary, I have called them innate. But I have used this term in the same sense as when we say that generosity is innate in certain families; or that certain maladies, such as gout or gravel, are innate in others; not that children born in these families are troubled with such diseases in their mother's womb; but because they are born with the disposition or the faculty of contracting them."[1]

[1] Remarques de René Descartes sur un certain placard imprimé aux Pays Bas vers la fin de l'année, 1647.—Descartes, *Œuvres*. Ed. Cousin, x. p. 71.

His troublesome disciple, Regius, having asserted that all our ideas come from observation or tradition, Descartes remarks :—

"So thoroughly erroneous is this assertion, that whoever has a proper comprehension of the action of our senses, and understands precisely the nature of that which is transmitted by them to our thinking faculty, will rather affirm that no ideas of things, such as are formed in thought, are brought to us by the senses, so that there is nothing in our ideas which is other than innate in the mind (*naturel à l'esprit*), or in the faculty of thinking, if only certain circumstances are excepted, which belong only to experience. For example, it is experience alone which causes us to judge that such and such ideas, now present in our minds, are related to certain things which are external to us ; not in truth, that they have been sent into our mind by these things, such as they are, by the organs of the senses ; but because these organs have transmitted something which has occasioned the mind, in virtue of its innate power, to form them at this time rather than at another.

"Nothing passes from external objects to the soul except certain motions of matter (*mouvemens corporels*), but neither these motions, nor the figures which they produce, are conceived by us as they exist in the sensory organs, as I have fully explained in my "Dioptrics" ; whence it follows that even the ideas of motion and of figures are innate (*naturellement en nous*). And, *à fortiori*, the ideas of pain, of colours, of sounds, and of all similar things must be innate, in order that the mind may represent them to itself, on the occasion of certain motions of matter with which they have no resemblance."

Whoever denies what is, in fact, an inconceivable proposition, that sensations pass, as such, from the external world into the mind, must admit the conclusion here laid down by Descartes, that, strictly speaking, sensations,

and *à fortiori*, all the other contents of the mind, are innate. Or, to state the matter in accordance with the views previously expounded, that they are products of the inherent properties of the thinking organ, in which they lie potentially, before they are called into existence by their appropriate causes.

But if all the contents of the mind are innate, what is meant by experience?

It is the conversion, by unknown causes, of these innate potentialities into actual existences. The organ of thought, prior to experience, may be compared to an untouched piano, in which it may be properly said that music is innate, inasmuch as its mechanism contains, potentially, so many octaves of musical notes. The unknown cause of sensation which Descartes calls the "je ne sais quoi dans les objets" or "choses telles qu'elles sont," and Kant the "Noumenon" or "Ding an sich," is represented by the musician; who, by touching the keys, converts the potentiality of the mechanism into actual sounds. A note so produced is the equivalent of a single experience.

All the melodies and harmonies that proceed from the piano depend upon the action of the musician upon the keys. There is no internal mechanism which, when certain keys are struck, gives rise to an accompaniment of which the musician is only indirectly the cause. According to Descartes, however—and this is what is generally fixed upon as the essence of his doctrine of innate ideas—the mind possesses such an internal mechanism, by which certain classes of thoughts are generated, on the occasion of certain experiences. Such thoughts are innate, just as sensations are innate; they are not copies of sensations, any more than sensations

are copies of motions; they are invariably generated in the mind, when certain experiences arise in it, just as sensations are invariably generated when certain bodily motions take place; they are universal, inasmuch as they arise under the same conditions in all men; they are necessary, because their genesis under these conditions is invariable. These innate thoughts are what Descartes terms "vérités" or truths: that is beliefs—and his notions respecting them are plainly set forth in a passage of the *Principes*.

"Thus far I have discussed that which we know as things: it remains that I should speak of that which we know as truths. For example, when we think that it is impossible to make anything out of nothing, we do not imagine that this proposition is a thing which exists, or a property of something, but we take it for a certain eternal truth, which has its seat in the mind (*pensée*), and is called a common notion or an axiom. Similarly, when we affirm that it is impossible that one and the same thing should exist and not exist at the same time; that that which has been created should not have been created; that he who thinks must exist while he thinks; and a number of other like propositions; these are only truths, and not things which exist outside our thoughts. And there is such a number of these that it would be wearisome to enumerate them: nor is it necessary to do so, because we cannot fail to know them when the occasion of thinking about them presents itself, and we are not blinded by any prejudices."

It would appear that Locke was not more familiar with Descartes' writings than Hume seems to have been; for, viewed in relation to the passages just cited, the arguments adduced in his famous polemic against innate ideas are totally irrelevant.

It has been shown that Hume practically, if not in

so many words, admits the justice of Descartes' assertion that, strictly speaking, sensations are innate; that is to say, that they are the product of the reaction of the organ of the mind on the stimulus of an "unknown cause," which is Descartes' "je ne sais quoi." Therefore, the difference between Descartes' opinion and that of Hume resolves itself into this: Given sensation-experiences, can all the contents of consciousness be derived from the collocation and metamorphosis of these experiences? Or, are new elements of consciousness, products of an innate potentiality distinct from sensibility, added to these? Hume affirms the former position, Descartes the latter. If the analysis of the phenomena of consciousness given in the preceding pages is correct, Hume is in error; while the father of modern philosophy had a truer insight, though he overstated the case. For want of sufficiently searching psychological investigations, Descartes was led to suppose that innumerable ideas, the evolution of which in the course of experience can be demonstrated, were direct or innate products of the thinking faculty.

As has been already pointed out, it is the great merit of Kant that he started afresh on the track indicated by Descartes, and steadily upheld the doctrine of the existence of elements of consciousness, which are neither sense-experiences nor any modifications of them. We may demur to the expression that space and time are forms of sensory intuition; but it imperfectly represents the great fact that co-existence and succession are mental phenomena not given in the mere sense experience.[1]

[1] "Wir können uns keinen Gegenstand denken, ohne durch Kategorien; wir können keinen gedachten Gegenstand erkennen, ohne durch Anschauungen, die jenen Begriffen entsprechen. Nun sind alle

unsere Anschauungen sinnlich, und diese Erkenntniss, so fern der Gegenstand derselben gegeben ist, ist empirisch. Empirische Erkenntniss aber ist Erfahrung. Folglich ist uns keine Erkenntniss *a priori* möglich, als lediglich von Gegenständen möglicher Erfahrung."

"Aber diese Erkenntniss, die bloss auf Gegenstände der Erfahrung eingeschränkt ist, ist darum nicht alle von der Erfahrung entlehnt, sondern was sowohl die reinen Anschauungen, als die reinen Verstandesbegriffe betrifft, so sind sie Elemente der Erkenntniss die in uns *a priori* angetroffen werden."—*Kritik der reinen Vernunft. Elementarlehre*, p. 135.

Without a glossary explanatory of Kant's terminology, this passage would be hardly intelligible in a translation; but it may be paraphrased thus: All knowledge is founded upon experiences of sensation, but it is not all derived from those experiences; inasmuch as the impressions of relation ("reine Anschauungen"; "reine Verstandesbegriffe") have a potential or *à priori* existence in us, and by their addition to sense-experiences, constitute knowledge.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CLASSIFICATION AND THE NOMENCLATURE OF MENTAL OPERATIONS.

If, as has been set forth in the preceding chapter, all mental states are effects of physical causes, it follows that what are called mental faculties and operations are, properly speaking, cerebral functions, allotted to definite, though not yet precisely assignable, parts of the brain.

These functions appear to be reducible to three groups, namely : Sensation, Correlation, and Ideation.

The organs of the functions of sensation and correlation are those portions of the cerebral substance, the molecular changes of which give rise to impressions of sensation and impressions of relation.

The changes in the nervous matter which bring about the effects which we call its functions, follow upon some kind of stimulus, and rapidly reaching their maximum, as rapidly die away. The effect of the irritation of a nerve-fibre on the cerebral substance with which it is connected may be compared to the pulling of a long bell-wire. The impulse takes a little time to reach the bell ; the bell rings and then becomes quiescent, until

another pull is given. So, in the brain, every sensation is the ring of a cerebral particle, the effect of a momentary impulse sent along a nerve-fibre.

If there were a complete likeness between the two terms of this very rough and ready comparison, it is obvious that there could be no such thing as memory. A bell records no audible sign of having been rung five minutes ago, and the activity of a sensigenous cerebral particle might similarly leave no trace. Under these circumstances, again, it would seem that the only impressions of relation which could arise would be those of co-existence and of similarity. For succession implies memory of an antecedent state.[1]

But the special peculiarity of the cerebral apparatus is, that any given function which has once been performed is very easily set a-going again, by causes more or less different from those to which it owed its origin. Of the mechanism of this generation of images of impressions or ideas (in Hume's sense), which may be termed *Ideation*, we know nothing at present, though the fact and its results are familiar enough.

During our waking, and many of our sleeping, hours, in fact, the function of ideation is in continual, if not continuous, activity. Trains of thought, as we call them, succeed one another without intermission, even when the starting of new trains by fresh sense-impressions is as far as possible prevented. The rapidity and the intensity of this ideational process are obviously dependent upon physiological conditions. The widest

[1] It is not worth while, for the present purpose, to consider whether, as all nervous action occupies a sensible time, the duration of one impression might not overlap that of the impression which follows it, in the case supposed.

differences in these respects are constitutional in men of different temperaments; and are observable in oneself, under varying conditions of hunger and repletion, fatigue and freshness, calmness and emotional excitement. The influence of diet on dreams; of stimulants upon the fulness and the velocity of the stream of thought; the delirious phantasms generated by disease, by hashish, or by alcohol; will occur to every one as examples of the marvellous sensitiveness of the apparatus of ideation to purely physical influences.

The succession of mental states in ideation is not fortuitous, but follows the law of association, which may be stated thus: that every idea tends to be followed by some other idea which is associated with the first, or its impression, by a relation of succession, of contiguity, or of likeness.

Thus the idea of the word horse just now presented itself to my mind, and was followed in quick succession by the ideas of four legs, hoofs, teeth, rider, saddle, racing, cheating; all of which ideas are connected in my experience with the impression, or the idea, of a horse and with one another, by the relations of contiguity and succession. No great attention to what passes in the mind is needful to prove that our trains of thought are neither to be arrested, nor even permanently controlled, by our desires or emotions. Nevertheless they are largely influenced by them. In the presence of a strong desire, or emotion, the stream of thought no longer flows on in a straight course, but seems, as it were, to eddy round the idea of that which is the object of the emotion. Every one who has "eaten his bread in sorrow" knows how strangely the current of ideas whirls about the conception of the object of regret or

remorse as a centre; every now and then, indeed, breaking away into the new tracks suggested by passing associations, but still returning to the central thought. Few can have been so happy as to have escaped the social bore, whose pet notion is certain to crop up whatever topic is started; while the fixed idea of the monomaniac is but the extreme form of the same phenomenon.

And as, on the one hand, it is so hard to drive away the thought we would fain be rid of; so, upon the other, the pleasant imaginations which we would so gladly retain are, sooner or later, jostled away by the crowd of claimants for birth into the world of consciousness; which hover as a sort of psychical possibilities, or inverse ghosts, the bodily presentments of spiritual phenomena to be, in the limbo of the brain. In that form of desire which is called "attention," the train of thought, held fast, for a time, in the desired direction, seems ever striving to get on to another line—and the junctions and sidings are so multitudinous!

The constituents of trains of ideas may be grouped in various ways.

Hume says:—

"We find, by experience, that when any impression has been present in the mind, it again makes its appearance there as an idea, and this it may do in two different ways: either when, on its new appearance, it retains a considerable degree of its first vivacity, and is somewhat intermediate between an impression and an idea; or when it entirely loses that vivacity, and is a perfect idea. The faculty by which we repeat our impressions in the first manner, is called the *memory*, and the other the *imagination*."—(I. pp. 23, 24.)

And he considers that the only difference between ideas of imagination and those of memory, except the

superior vivacity of the latter, lies in the fact that those of memory preserve the original order of the impressions from which they are derived, while the imagination "is free to transpose and change its ideas."

The latter statement of the difference between memory and imagination is less open to cavil than the former, though by no means unassailable.

The special characteristic of a memory surely is not its vividness; but that it is a complex idea, in which the idea of that which is remembered is related by co-existence with other ideas, and by antecedence with present impressions.

If I say I remember A. B., the chance acquaintance of ten years ago, it is not because my idea of A. B. is very vivid—on the contrary, it is extremely faint—but because that idea is associated with ideas of impressions co-existent with those which I call A. B.; and that all these are at the end of the long series of ideas, which represent that much past time. In truth I have a much more vivid idea of Mr. Pickwick, or of Colonel Newcome, than I have of A. B.; but, associated with the ideas of these persons, I have no idea of their having ever been derived from the world of impressions; and so they are relegated to the world of imagination. On the other hand, the characteristic of an imagination may properly be said to lie not in its intensity, but in the fact that, as Hume puts it, "the arrangement," or the relations, of the ideas are different from those in which the impressions, whence these ideas are derived, occurred; or in other words, that the thing imagined has not happened. In popular usage, however, imagination is frequently employed for simple memory—"In imagination I was back in the old times."

It is a curious omission on Hume's part that, while thus dwelling on two classes of ideas, *Memories* and *Imaginations*, he has not, at the same time, taken notice of a third group, of no small importance, which are as different from imaginations as memories are; though, like the latter, they are often confounded with pure imaginations in general speech. These are the ideas of expectation, or as they may be called for the sake of brevity, *Expectations*; which differ from simple imaginations in being associated with the idea of the existence of corresponding impressions, in the future, just as memories contain the idea of the existence of the corresponding impressions in the past.

The ideas belonging to two of the three groups enumerated: namely, memories and expectations, present some features, of particular interest. And first, with respect to memories.

In Hume's words, all simple ideas are copies of simple impressions. The idea of a single sensation is a faint, but accurate, image of that sensation; the idea of a relation is a reproduction of the feeling of co-existence, of succession, or of similarity. But, when complex impressions or complex ideas are reproduced as memories, it is probable that the copies never give all the details of the originals with perfect accuracy, and it is certain that they rarely do so. No one possesses a memory so good, that if he has only once observed a natural object, a second inspection does not show him something that he has forgotten. Almost all, if not all, our memories are therefore sketches, rather than portraits, of the originals—the salient features are obvious, while the subordinate characters are obscure or unrepresented.

Now, when several complex impressions which are

more or less different from one another—let us say that out of ten impressions in each, six are the same in all, and four are different from all the rest—are successively presented to the mind, it is easy to see what must be the nature of the result. The repetition of the six similar impressions will strengthen the six corresponding elements of the complex idea, which will therefore acquire greater vividness; while the four differing impressions of each will not only acquire no greater strength than they had at first, but, in accordance with the law of association, they will all tend to appear at once, and will thus neutralise one another.

This mental operation may be rendered comprehensible by considering what takes place in the formation of compound photographs—when the images of the faces of six sitters, for example, are each received on the same photographic plate, for a sixth of the time requisite to take one portrait. The final result is that all those points in which the six faces agree are brought out strongly, while all those in which they differ are left vague; and thus what may be termed a *generic* portrait of the six, in contradistinction to a *specific* portrait of any one, is produced.

Thus our ideas of single complex impressions are incomplete in one way, and those of numerous, more or less similar, complex impressions are incomplete in another way; that is to say, they are *generic*, not *specific*. And hence it follows, that our ideas of the impressions in question are not, in the strict sense of the word, copies of those impressions; while, at the same time, they may exist in the mind independently of language.

The generic ideas which are formed from several similar, but not identical, complex experiences are what

are commonly called *abstract* or *general* ideas; and Berkeley endeavoured to prove that all general ideas are nothing but particular ideas annexed to a certain term, which gives them a more extensive signification, and makes them recall, upon occasion, other individuals which are similar to them. Hume says that he regards this as "one of the greatest and the most valuable discoveries that has been made of late years in the republic of letters," and endeavours to confirm it in such a manner that it shall be "put beyond all doubt and controversy."

I may venture to express a doubt whether he has succeeded in his object; but the subject is an abstruse one; and I must content myself with the remark, that though Berkeley's view appears to be largely applicable to such general ideas as are formed after language has been acquired, and to all the more abstract sort of conceptions, yet that general ideas of sensible objects may nevertheless be produced in the way indicated, and may exist independently of language. In dreams, one sees houses, trees and other objects, which are perfectly recognisable as such, but which remind one of the actual objects as seen "out of the corner of the eye," or of the pictures thrown by a badly-focussed magic lantern. A man addresses us who is like a figure seen by twilight; or we travel through countries where every feature of the scenery is vague; the outlines of the hills are ill-marked, and the rivers have no defined banks. They are, in short, generic ideas of many past impressions of men, hills, and rivers. An anatomist who occupies himself intently with the examination of several specimens of some new kind of animal, in course of time acquires so vivid a conception of its form and structure, that the

idea may take visible shape and become a sort of waking dream. But the figure which thus presents itself is generic, not specific. It is no copy of any one specimen, but, more or less, a mean of the series; and there seems no reason to doubt that the minds of children before they learn to speak, and of deaf mutes, are peopled with similarly generated generic ideas of sensible objects.

It has been seen that a memory is a complex idea made up of at least two constituents. In the first place there is the idea of an object; and secondly, there is the idea of the relation of antecedence between that object and some present objects.

To say that one has a recollection of a given event and to express the belief that it happened, are two ways of giving an account of one and the same mental fact. But the former mode of stating the fact of memory is preferable, at present, because it certainly does not presuppose the existence of language in the mind of the rememberer; while it may be said that the latter does. It is perfectly possible to have the idea of an event A, and of the events B, C, D, which came between it and the present state E, as mere mental pictures. It is hardly to be doubted that children have very distinct memories long before they can speak; and we believe that such is the case because they act upon their memories. But, if they act upon their memories, they to all intents and purposes believe their memories. In other words, though, being devoid of language, the child cannot frame a proposition expressive of belief; cannot say "sugar-plum was sweet;" yet the psychical operation of which that

[illegible] is perfectly [illegible] sweet- [illegible] state of mind which [illegible] as the [illegible] assumed [illegible] would bear [illegible]

[illegible] precede the use [illegible] merely instinc- [illegible] justification, [illegible] from its [illegible] is curious [illegible] always takes the [illegible] It may be [illegible]

[illegible] is as certain to me as [illegible] of the imagina- [illegible] the contrary [illegible] admit, that the [illegible] the fact, that the idea [illegible] with the [illegible] who will be at [illegible] with hundreds of [illegible]

[illegible] are important under [illegible] that the idea of even a [illegible] may be so powerfully asso- [illegible] certain time, as to originate a [illegible] contrary is inconceivable, and which [illegible] properly said to be necessary. A [illegible] strong, impression may not [illegible] by any memory But this defect of [illegible] may be compensated by their repeti-

tion; and what Hume means by "custom" or "habit" is simply the repetition of experiences.

"Wherever the repetition of any particular act or operation produces a propensity to renew the same act or operation, without being impelled by any reasoning or process of the understanding, we always say that this propensity is the effect of *Custom*. By employing that word, we pretend not to have given the ultimate reason of such a propensity. We only point out a principle of human nature which is universally acknowledged, and which is well known by its effects."—(IV. p. 52.)

It has been shown that an expectation is a complex idea which, like a memory, is made up of two constituents. The one is the idea of an object, the other is the idea of a relation of sequence between that object and some present object; and the reasoning which applied to memories applies to expectations. To have an expectation[1] of a given event, and to believe that it will happen, are only two modes of stating the same fact. Again, just in the same way as we call a memory, put into words, a belief, so we give the same name to an expectation in like clothing. And the fact already cited, that a child before it can speak acts upon its memories, is good evidence that it forms expectations. The infant who knows the meaning neither of "sugar-plum" nor of "sweet," nevertheless is in full possession of that complex idea, which, when he has learned to employ language, will take the form of the verbal proposition, "A sugar-plum will be sweet."

[1] We give no name to faint memories; but expectations of like character play so large a part in human affairs, that they, together with the associated emotions of pleasure and pain, are distinguished as "hopes" or "fears."

Thus, beliefs of expectation, or at any rate their potentialities, are, as much as those of memory, antecedent to speech, and are as incapable of justification by any logical process. In fact, expectations are but memories inverted. The association which is the foundation of expectation must exist as a memory before it can play its part. As Hume says,—

". . . it is certain we here advance a very intelligible proposition at least, if not a true one, when we assert that after the constant conjunction of two objects, heat and flame, for instance, weight and solidity, we are determined by custom alone to expect the one from the appearance of the other. This hypothesis seems even the only one which explains the difficulty why we draw from a thousand instances, an inference which we are not able to draw from one instance, that is in no respect different from them." . . .

"Custom, then, is the great guide of human life. It is that principle alone which renders our experience useful to us, and makes us expect, for the future, a similar train of events with those which have appeared in the past." . .

"All belief of matter-of-fact or real existence is derived merely from some object present to the memory or senses, and a customary conjunction between that and some other object; or in other words, having found, in many instances, that any two kinds of objects, flame and heat, snow and cold, have always been conjoined together, if flame or snow be presented anew to the senses, the mind is carried by custom to expect heat or cold, and to *believe* that such a quality does exist and will discover itself upon a nearer approach. This belief is the necessary result of placing the mind in such circumstances. It is an operation of the soul, when we are so situated, as unavoidable as to feel the passion of love, when we receive benefits, or hatred, when we meet with injuries. All these operations are a species of natural instincts, which no reasoning or process of the thought and understanding is able either to produce or to prevent."—(IV. pp. 52—56.)

The only comment that appears needful here is, that Hume has attached somewhat too exclusive a weight to that repetition of experiences to which alone the term "custom" can be properly applied. The proverb says that "a burnt child dreads the fire"; and any one who will make the experiment will find, that one burning is quite sufficient to establish an indissoluble belief that contact with fire and pain go together.

As a sort of inverted memory, expectation follows the same laws; hence, while a belief of expectation is, in most cases, as Hume truly says, established by custom, or the repetition of weak impressions, it may quite well be based upon a single strong experience. In the absence of language, a specific memory cannot be strengthened by repetition. It is obvious that that which has happened cannot happen again, with the same collateral associations of co-existence and succession. But, memories of the co-existence and succession of impressions are capable of being indefinitely strengthened by the recurrence of similar impressions, in the same order, even though the collateral associations are totally different; in fact, the ideas of these impressions become generic.

If I recollect that a piece of ice was cold yesterday, nothing can strengthen the recollection of that particular fact; on the contrary, it may grow weaker, in the absence of any record of it. But if I touch ice to-day and again find it cold, the association is repeated, and the memory of it becomes stronger. And, by this very simple process of repetition of experience, it has become utterly impossible for us to think of having handled ice without thinking of its coldness. But, that which is, under the one aspect, the strengthening of a memory, is,

under the other, the intensification of an expectation. Not only can we not think of having touched ice, without feeling cold, but we cannot think of touching ice, in the future, without expecting to feel cold. An expectation so strong that it cannot be changed, or abolished, may thus be generated out of repeated experiences. And it is important to note that such expectations may be formed quite unconsciously. In my dressing-room, a certain can is usually kept full of water, and I am in the habit of lifting it to pour out water for washing. Sometimes the servant has forgotten to fill it, and then I find that, when I take hold of the handle, the can goes up with a jerk. Long association has, in fact, led me to expect the can to have a considerable weight; and, quite unawares, my muscular effort is adjusted to the expectation.

The process of strengthening generic memories of succession, and, at the same time, intensifying expectations of succession, is what is commonly called *verification*. The impression B has frequently been observed to follow the impression A. The association thus produced is represented as the memory, A → B. When the impression A appears again, the idea of B follows, associated with that of the immediate appearance of the impression B. If the impression B does appear, the expectation is said to be verified; while the memory A → B is strengthened, and gives rise in turn to a stronger expectation. And repeated verification may render that expectation so strong that its non-verification is inconceivable.

CHAPTER V.

THE MENTAL PHENOMENA OF ANIMALS.

In the course of the preceding chapters, attention has been more than once called to the fact, that the elements of consciousness and the operations of the mental faculties, under discussion, exist independently of and antecedent to, the existence of language.

If any weight is to be attached to arguments from analogy, there is overwhelming evidence in favour of the belief that children, before they can speak, and deaf mutes, possess the feelings to which those who have acquired the faculty of speech apply the name of sensations; that they have the feelings of relation; that trains of ideas pass through their minds; that generic ideas are formed from specific ones; and, that among these, ideas of memory and expectation occupy a most important place, inasmuch as, in their quality of potential beliefs, they furnish the grounds of action. This conclusion, in truth, is one of those which, though they cannot be demonstrated, are never doubted; and, since it is highly probable and cannot be disproved, we are quite safe in accepting it, as, at any rate, a good working hypothesis.

But, if we accept it, we must extend it to a much

wider assemblage of living beings. Whatever cogency is attached to the arguments in favour of the occurrence of all the fundamental phenomena of mind in young children and deaf mutes, an equal force must be allowed to appertain to those which may be adduced to prove that the higher animals have minds. We must admit that Hume does not express himself too strongly when he says—

> "no truth appears to me more evident, than that the beasts are endowed with thought and reason as well as men. The arguments are in this case so obvious, that they never escape the most stupid and ignorant."—(I. p. 232.)

In fact, this is one of the few cases in which the conviction which forces itself upon the stupid and the ignorant, is fortified by the reasonings of the intelligent, and has its foundation deepened by every increase of knowledge. It is not merely that the observation of the actions of animals almost irresistibly suggests the attribution to them of mental states, such as those which accompany corresponding actions in men. The minute comparison which has been instituted by anatomists and physiologists between the organs which we know to constitute the apparatus of thought in man, and the corresponding organs in brutes, has demonstrated the existence of the closest similarity between the two, not only in structure, as far as the microscope will carry us, but in function, as far as functions are determinable by experiment. There is no question in the mind of any one acquainted with the facts that, so far as observation and experiment can take us, the structure and the functions of the nervous system are fundamentally the same in an ape, or in a dog, and in a man. And the sug-

gestion that we must stop at the exact point at which direct proof fails us; and refuse to believe that the similarity which extends so far stretches yet further, is no better than a quibble. Robinson Crusoe did not feel bound to conclude, from the single human footprint which he saw in the sand, that the maker of the impression had only one leg.

Structure for structure, down to the minutest microscopical details, the eye, the ear, the olfactory organs, the nerves, the spinal cord, the brain of an ape, or of a dog, correspond with the same organs in the human subject. Cut a nerve, and the evidence of paralysis, or of insensibility, is the same in the two cases; apply pressure to the brain, or administer a narcotic, and the signs of intelligence disappear in the one as in the other. Whatever reason we have for believing that the changes which take place in the normal cerebral substance of man give rise to states of consciousness, the same reason exists for the belief that the modes of motion of the cerebral substance of an ape, or of a dog, produce like effects.

A dog acts as if he had all the different kinds of impressions of sensation of which each of us is cognisant. Moreover, he governs his movements exactly as if he had the feelings of distance, form, succession, likeness, and unlikeness, with which we are familiar, or as if the impressions of relation were generated in his mind as they are in our own. Sleeping dogs frequently appear to dream. If they do, it must be admitted that ideation goes on in them while they are asleep; and, in that case, there is no reason to doubt that they are conscious of trains of ideas in their waking state. Further, that dogs, if they possess ideas at all, have

memories and expectations, and those potential beliefs of which these states are the foundation, can hardly be doubted by any one who is conversant with their ways. Finally, there would appear to be no valid argument against the supposition that dogs form generic ideas of sensible objects. One of the most curious peculiarities of the dog mind is its inherent snobbishness, shown by the regard paid to external respectability. The dog who barks furiously at a beggar will let a well-dressed man pass him without opposition. Has he not then a "generic idea" of rags and dirt associated with the idea of aversion, and that of sleek broadcloth associated with the idea of liking?

In short, it seems hard to assign any good reason for denying to the higher animals any mental state, or process, in which the employment of the vocal or visual symbols of which language is composed is not involved; and comparative psychology confirms the position in relation to the rest of the animal world assigned to man by comparative anatomy. As comparative anatomy is easily able to show that, physically, man is but the last term of a long series of forms, which lead, by slow gradations, from the highest mammal to the almost formless speck of living protoplasm, which lies on the shadowy boundary between animal and vegetable life; so, comparative psychology, though but a young science, and far short of her elder sister's growth, points to the same conclusion.

In the absence of a distinct nervous system, we have no right to look for its product, consciousness; and, even in those forms of animal life in which the nervous apparatus has reached no higher degree of development, than that exhibited by the system of the spinal cord

and the foundation of the brain in ourselves, the argument from analogy leaves the assumption of the existence of any form of consciousness unsupported. With the super-addition of a nervous apparatus corresponding with the cerebrum in ourselves, it is allowable to suppose the appearance of the simplest states of consciousness, or the sensations; and it is conceivable that these may at first exist, without any power of reproducing them, as memories; and, consequently, without ideation. Still higher, an apparatus of correlation may be superadded, until, as all these organs become more developed, the condition of the highest speechless animals is attained.

It is a remarkable example of Hume's sagacity that he perceived the importance of a branch of science which, even now, can hardly be said to exist; and that, in a remarkable passage, he sketches in bold outlines the chief features of comparative psychology.

". . . any theory, by which we explain the operations of the understanding, or the origin and connexion of the passions in man, will acquire additional authority if we find that the same theory is requisite to explain the same phenomena in all other animals. We shall make trial of this with regard to the hypothesis by which we have, in the foregoing discourse, endeavoured to account for all experimental reasonings; and it is hoped that this new point of view will serve to confirm all our former observations.

"*First*, it seems evident that animals, as well as men, learn many things from experience, and infer that the same events will always follow from the same causes. By this principle they become acquainted with the more obvious properties of external objects, and gradually, from their birth, treasure up a knowledge of the nature of fire, water, earth, stones, heights, depths, &c., and of the effects which result from their

operation. The ignorance and inexperience of the young are here plainly distinguishable from the cunning and sagacity of the old, who have learned, by long observation, to avoid what hurt them, and pursue what gave ease or pleasure. A horse that has been accustomed to the field, becomes acquainted with the proper height which he can leap, and will never attempt what exceeds his force and ability. An old greyhound will trust the more fatiguing part of the chase to the younger, and will place himself so as to meet the hare in her doubles; nor are the conjectures which he forms on this occasion founded on anything but his observation and experience.

"This is still more evident from the effects of discipline and education on animals, who, by the proper application of rewards and punishments, may be taught any course of action, the most contrary to their natural instincts and propensities. Is it not experience which renders a dog apprehensive of pain when you menace him, or lift up the whip to beat him? Is it not even experience which makes him answer to his name, and infer from such an arbitrary sound that you mean him rather than any of his fellows, and intend to call him, when you pronounce it in a certain manner and with a certain tone and accent?

"In all these cases we may observe that the animal infers some fact beyond what immediately strikes his senses; and that this inference is altogether founded on past experience, while the creature expects from the present object the same consequences which it has always found in its observation to result from similar objects.

"*Secondly*, it is impossible that this inference of the animal can be founded on any process of argument or reasoning, by which he concludes that like events must follow like objects, and that the course of nature will always be regular in its operations. For if there be in reality any arguments of this nature they surely lie too abstruse for the observation of such imperfect understandings; since it may well employ the utmost care and attention of a philosophic genius to discover and observe them. Animals therefore are not guided in these inferences by reasoning; neither are children; neither are

the generality of mankind in their ordinary actions and conclusions; neither are philosophers themselves, who, in all the active parts of life, are in the main the same as the vulgar, and are governed by the same maxims. Nature must have provided some other principle, of more ready and more general use and application; nor can an operation of such immense consequence in life as that of inferring effects from causes, be trusted to the uncertain process of reasoning and argumentation. Were this doubtful with regard to men, it seems to admit of no question with regard to the brute creation; and the conclusion being once firmly established in the one, we have a strong presumption, from all the rules of analogy, that it ought to be universally admitted, without any exception or reserve. It is custom alone which engages animals, from every object that strikes their senses, to infer its usual attendant, and carries their imagination from the appearance of the one to conceive the other, in that particular manner which we denominate *belief*. No other explication can be given of this operation in all the higher as well as lower classes of sensitive beings which fall under our notice and observation." —(IV. pp. 122—4.)

It will be observed that Hume appears to contrast the "inference of the animal" with the "process of argument or reasoning in man." But it would be a complete misapprehension of his intention, if we were to suppose, that he thereby means to imply that there is any real difference between the two processes. The "inference of the animal" is a potential belief of expectation; the process of argument, or reasoning, in man is based upon potential beliefs of expectation, which are formed in the man exactly in the same way as in the animal. But, in men endowed with speech, the mental state which constitutes the potential belief is represented by a verbal proposition, and thus becomes what all the world recognises as a belief. The fallacy

which Hume combats is, that the proposition, or verbal representative of a belief, has come to be regarded as a reality, instead of as the mere symbol which it really is; and that reasoning, or logic, which deals with nothing but propositions, is supposed to be necessary in order to validate the natural fact symbolised by those propositions. It is a fallacy similar to that of supposing that money is the foundation of wealth, whereas it is only the wholly unessential symbol of property.

In the passage which immediately follows that just quoted, Hume makes admissions which might be turned to serious account against some of his own doctrines.

"But though animals learn many parts of their knowledge from observation, there are also many parts of it which they derive from the original hand of Nature, which much exceed the share of capacity they possess on ordinary occasions, and in which they improve, little or nothing, by the longest practice and experience. These we denominate INSTINCTS, and are so apt to admire as something very extraordinary and inexplicable by all the disquisitions of human understanding. But our wonder will perhaps cease or diminish when we consider that the experimental reasoning itself, which we possess in common with beasts, and on which the whole conduct of life depends, is nothing but a species of instinct or mechanical power, that acts in us unknown to ourselves, and in its chief operations is not directed by any such relations or comparison of ideas as are the proper objects of our intellectual faculties.

"Though the instinct be different, yet still it is an instinct which teaches a man to avoid the fire, as much as that which teaches a bird, with such exactness, the art of incubation and the whole economy and order of its nursery."—(IV. pp. 125, 126.)

The parallel here drawn between the "avoidance of a fire" by a man and the incubatory instinct of a bird

is inexact. The man avoids fire when he has had experience of the pain produced by burning; but the bird incubates the first time it lays eggs, and therefore before it has had any experience of incubation. For the comparison to be admissible, it would be necessary that a man should avoid fire the first time he saw it, which is notoriously not the case.

The term "instinct" is very vague and ill-defined. It is commonly employed to denote any action, or even feeling, which is not dictated by conscious reasoning, whether it is, or is not, the result of previous experience. It is "instinct" which leads a chicken just hatched to pick up a grain of corn; parental love is said to be "instintive"; the drowning man who catches at a straw does it "instinctively"; and the hand that accidentally touches something hot is drawn back by "instinct." Thus "instinct" is made to cover everything from a simple reflex movement, in which the organ of consciousness need not be at all implicated, up to a complex combination of acts directed towards a definite end and accompanied by intense consciousness.

But this loose employment of the term "instinct" really accords with the nature of the thing; for it is wholly impossible to draw any line of demarcation between reflex actions and instincts. If a frog, on the flank of which a little drop of acid has been placed, rubs it off with the foot of the same side; and, if that foot be held, performs the same operation, at the cost of much effort, with the other foot, it certainly displays a curious instinct. But it is no less true that the whole operation is a reflex operation of the spinal cord, which can be performed quite as well when the brain is destroyed; and between which and simple reflex actions

there is a complete series of gradations. In like manner, when an infant takes the breast, it is impossible to say whether the action should be rather termed instinctive or reflex.

What are usually called the instincts of animals are, however, acts of such a nature that, if they were performed by men, they would involve the generation of a series of ideas and of inferences from them; and it is a curious, and apparently an insoluble, problem whether they are, or are not, accompanied by cerebral changes of the same nature as those which give rise to ideas and inferences in ourselves. When a chicken picks up a grain, for example, are there, firstly, certain sensations, accompanied by the feeling of relation between the grain and its own body; secondly, a desire of the grain; thirdly, a volition to seize it? Or, are only the sensational terms of the series actually represented in consciousness?

The latter seems the more probable opinion, though it must be admitted that the other alternative is possible. But, in this case, the series of mental states which occurs is such as would be represented in language by a series of propositions, and would afford proof positive of the existence of innate ideas, in the Cartesian sense. Indeed, a metaphysical fowl, brooding over the mental operations of his fully fledged consciousness, might appeal to the fact as proof that, in the very first action of his life, he assumed the existence of the Ego and the non-Ego, and of a relation between the two.

In all seriousness, if the existence of instincts be granted, the possibility of the existence of innate ideas, in the most extended sense ever imagined by Descartes, must also be admitted. In fact, Descartes, as we have

seen, illustrates what he means by an innate idea, by the analogy of hereditary diseases or hereditary mental peculiarities, such as generosity On the other hand, hereditary mental tendencies may justly be termed instincts; and still more appropriately might those special proclivities, which constitute what we call genius, come into the same category.

The child who is impelled to draw as soon as it can hold a pencil; the Mozart who breaks out into music as early; the boy Bidder who worked out the most complicated sums without learning arithmetic; the boy Pascal who evolved Euclid out of his own consciousness: all these may be said to have been impelled by instinct, as much as are the beaver and the bee. And the man of genius, is distinct in kind from the man of cleverness, by reason of the working within him of strong innate tendencies—which cultivation may improve, but which it can no more create, than horticulture can make thistles bear figs. The analogy between a musical instrument and the mind holds good here also. Art and industry may get much music, of a sort, out of a penny whistle; but, when all is done, it has no chance against an organ. The innate musical potentialities of the two are infinitely different.

CHAPTER VI.

LANGUAGE—PROPOSITIONS CONCERNING NECESSARY TRUTHS.

THOUGH we may accept Hume's conclusion that speechless animals think, believe, and reason; yet, it must be borne in mind, that there is an important difference between the signification of the terms when applied to them and when applied to those animals which possess language. The thoughts of the former are trains of mere feelings; those of the latter are, in addition, trains of the ideas of the signs which represent feelings, and which are called "words."

A word, in fact, is a spoken or written sign, the idea of which is, by repetition, so closely associated with the idea of the simple or complex feeling which it represents, that the association becomes indissoluble. No Englishman, for example, can think of the word "dog" without immediately having the idea of the group of impressions to which that name is given; and conversely, the group of impressions immediately calls up the idea of the word "dog."

The association of words with impressions and ideas is the process of naming; and language approaches perfection, in proportion as the shades of difference between various ideas and impressions are represented by differences in their names.

The names of simple impressions and ideas, or of

groups of co-existent or successive complex impressions and ideas, considered *per se*, are substantives; as redness, dog, silver, mouth; while the names of impressions or ideas considered as parts or attributes of a complex whole, are adjectives. Thus redness, considered as part of the complex idea of a rose, becomes the adjective red; flesh-eater, as part of the idea of a dog, is represented by carnivorous; whiteness, as part of the idea of silver, is white; and so on.

The linguistic machinery for the expression of belief is called *predication*; and, as all beliefs express ideas of relation, we may say that the sign of predication is the verbal symbol of a feeling of relation. The words which serve to indicate predication are verbs. If I say "silver" and then "white," I merely utter two names; but if I interpose between them the verb "is," I express a belief in the co-existence of the feeling of whiteness with the other feelings which constitute the totality of the complex idea of silver; in other words, I predicate "whiteness" of silver.

In such a case as this, the verb expresses predication and nothing else, and is called a copula. But, in the great majority of verbs, the word is the sign of a complex idea, and the predication is expressed only by its form. Thus in "silver shines," the verb "to shine" is the sign for the feeling of brightness, and the mark of predication lies in the form "shine-*s*."

Another result is brought about by the forms of verbs. By slight modifications they are made to indicate that a belief, or predication, is a memory, or is an expectation. Thus "silver *shone*" expresses a memory; "silver *will* shine" an expectation.

The form of words which expresses a predication is

a proposition. Hence, every predication is the verbal equivalent of a belief; and, as every belief is either an immediate consciousness, a memory, or an expectation, and as every expectation is traceable to a memory, it follows that, in the long run, all propositions express either immediate states of consciousness, or memories. The proposition which predicates A of X must mean either, that the fact is testified by my present consciousness, as when I say that two colours, visible at this moment, resemble one another; or that A is indissolubly associated with X in memory; or that A is indissolubly associated with X in expectation. But it has already been shown that expectation is only an expression of memory.

Hume does not discuss the nature of language, but so much of what remains to be said, concerning his philosophical tenets, turns upon the value and the origin of verbal propositions, that this summary sketch of the relations of language to the thinking process will probably not be deemed superfluous.

So large an extent of the field of thought is traversed by Hume, in his discussion of the verbal propositions in which mankind enshrine their beliefs, that it would be impossible to follow him throughout all the windings of his long journey, within the limits of this essay. I purpose, therefore, to limit myself to those propositions which concern—1. Necessary Truths; 2. The order of Nature; 3. The Soul; 4. Theism; 5. The Passions and Volition; 6. The Principle of Morals.

Hume's views respecting necessary truths, and more particularly concerning causation, have, more than any other part of his teaching, contributed to give him a prominent place in the history of philosophy.

"All the objects of human reason and inquiry may naturally be divided into two kinds, to wit, *relations of ideas* and *matters of fact*. Of the first kind are the sciences of geometry, algebra, and arithmetic, and, in short, every affirmation which is either intuitively or demonstratively certain. *That the square of the hypothenuse is equal to the square of the two sides*, is a proposition which expresses a relation between these two figures. *That three times five is equal to the half of thirty*, expresses a relation between these numbers. Propositions of this kind are discoverable by the mere operation of thought without dependence on whatever is anywhere existent in the universe. Though there never were a circle or a triangle in nature, the truths demonstrated by Euclid would for ever retain their certainty and evidence.

"Matters of fact, which are the second objects of human reason, are not ascertained in the same manner, nor is an evidence of their truth, however great, of a like nature with the foregoing. The contrary of every matter of fact is still possible, because it can never imply a contradiction, and is conceived by the mind with the same facility and distinctness, as if ever so conformable to reality. *That the sun will not rise to-morrow*, is no less intelligible a proposition, and implies no more contradiction, than the affirmation, *that it will rise*. We should in vain, therefore, attempt to demonstrate its falsehood. Were it demonstratively false, it would imply a contradiction, and could never be distinctly conceived by the mind."—(IV. pp. 32, 33.)

The distinction here drawn between the truths of geometry and other kinds of truth is far less sharply indicated in the *Treatise*, but as Hume expressly disowns any opinions on these matters but such as are expressed in the *Inquiry*, we may confine ourselves to the latter; and it is needful to look narrowly into the propositions here laid down, as much stress has been laid upon Hume's admission that the truths of mathematics are intuitively and demonstratively certain; in

other words, that they are necessary and, in that respect, differ from all other kinds of belief.

What is meant by the assertion that "propositions of this kind are discoverable by the mere operation of thought without dependence on what is anywhere existent in the universe"?

Suppose that there were no such things as impressions of sight and touch anywhere in the universe, what idea could we have even of a straight line, much less of a triangle and of the relations between its sides? The fundamental proposition of all Hume's philosophy is that ideas are copied from impressions; and, therefore, if there were no impressions of straight lines and triangles there could be no ideas of straight lines and triangles. But what we mean by the universe is the sum of our actual and possible impressions.

So, again, whether our conception of number is derived from relations of impressions in space or in time, the impressions must exist in nature, that is, in experience, before their relations can be perceived. Form and number are mere names for certain relations between matters of fact; unless a man had seen or felt the difference between a straight line and a crooked one, straight and crooked would have no more meaning to him, than red and blue to the blind.

The axiom, that things which are equal to the same are equal to one another, is only a particular case of the predication of similarity; if there were no impressions, it is obvious that there could be no predicates. But what is an existence in the universe but an impression?

If what are called necessary truths are rigidly analysed, they will be found to be of two kinds. Either they depend on the convention which underlies the

possibility of intelligible speech, that terms shall always have the same meaning; or they are propositions the negation of which implies the dissolution of some association in memory or expectation, which is in fact indissoluble; or the denial of some fact of immediate consciousness.

The "necessary truth" A = A means that the perception which is called A shall always be called A. The "necessary truth" that "two straight lines cannot inclose a space," means that we have no memory, and can form no expectation of their so doing. The denial of the "necessary truth" that the thought now in my mind exists, involves the denial of consciousness.

To the assertion that the evidence of matter of fact, is not so strong as that of relations of ideas, it may be justly replied, that a great number of matters of fact are nothing but relations of ideas. If I say that red is unlike blue, I make an assertion concerning a relation of ideas; but it is also matter of fact, and the contrary proposition is inconceivable. If I remember[1] something that happened five minutes ago, that is matter of fact; and, at the same time, it expresses a relation between the event remembered and the present time. It is wholly inconceivable to me that the event did not happen, so that my assurance respecting it is as strong as that which I have respecting any other necessary truth. In fact, the man is either very wise or very virtuous, or very lucky, perhaps all three, who has gone through life without accumulating a store of such necessary beliefs which he would give a good deal to be able to disbelieve.

[1] Hume, however, expressly includes the "records of our memory" among his matters of fact.—(IV. p. 33.)

It would be beside the mark to discuss the matter further on the present occasion. It is sufficient to point out that, whatever may be the differences, between mathematical and other truths, they do not justify Hume's statement. And it is, at any rate, impossible to prove, that the cogency of mathematical first principles is due to anything more than these circumstances; that the experiences with which they are concerned are among the first which arise in the mind; that they are so incessantly repeated as to justify us, according to the ordinary laws of ideation, in expecting that the associations which they form will be of extreme tenacity; while the fact, that the expectations based upon them are always verified, finishes the process of welding them together.

Thus, if the axioms of mathematics are innate, nature would seem to have taken unnecessary trouble; since the ordinary process of association appears to be amply sufficient to confer upon them all the universality and necessity which they actually possess.

Whatever needless admissions Hume may have made respecting other necessary truths he is quite clear about the axiom of causation, "That whatever event has a beginning must have a cause;" whether and in what sense it is a necessary truth; and, that question being decided, whence it is derived.

With respect to the first question, Hume denies that it is a necessary truth, in the sense that we are unable to conceive the contrary. The evidence by which he supports this conclusion in the *Inquiry*, however, is not strictly relevant to the issue.

"No object ever discovers, by the qualities which appear to the senses, either the cause which produced it, or the effects

which will arise from it; nor can our reason, unassisted by experience, ever draw any inference concerning real existence and matter of fact."—(IV. p. 35.)

Abundant illustrations are given of this assertion, which indeed cannot be seriously doubted; but it does not follow that, because we are totally unable to say what cause preceded, or what effect will succeed, any event, we do not necessarily suppose that the event had a cause and will be succeeded by an effect. The scientific investigator who notes a new phenomenon may be utterly ignorant of its cause, but he will, without hesitation, seek for that cause. If you ask him why he does so, he will probably say that it must have had a cause; and thereby imply that his belief in causation is a necessary belief.

In the *Treatise* Hume indeed takes the bull by the horns:

"... as all distinct ideas are separable from each other, and as the ideas of cause and effect are evidently distinct, 'twill be easy for us to conceive any object to be non-existent this moment and existent the next, without conjoining to it the distinct idea of a cause or productive principle."—(I. p. 111.)

If Hume had been content to state what he believed to be matter of fact, and had abstained from giving superfluous reasons for that which is susceptible of being proved or disproved only by personal experience, his position would have been stronger. For it seems clear that, on the ground of observation, he is quite right. Any man who lets his fancy run riot in a waking dream, may experience the existence at one moment, and the non-existence at the next, of phenomena which suggest no connexion of cause and effect. Not only so, but it is notorious that, to the unthinking mass of man-

kind, nine-tenths of the facts of life do not suggest the relation of cause and effect; and they practically deny the existence of any such relation by attributing them to chance. Few gamblers but would stare if they were told that the falling of a die on a particular face is as much the effect of a definite cause as the fact of its falling; it is a proverb that "the wind bloweth where it listeth;" and even thoughtful men usually receive with surprise the suggestion, that the form of the crest of every wave that breaks, wind-driven, on the sea-shore, and the direction of every particle of foam that flies before the gale, are the exact effects of definite causes; and, as such, must be capable of being determined, deductively, from the laws of motion and the properties of air and water. So again, there are large numbers of highly intelligent persons who rather pride themselves on their fixed belief that our volitions have no cause; or that the will causes itself, which is either the same thing, or a contradiction in terms.

Hume's argument in support of what appears to be a true proposition, however, is of the circular sort, for the major premiss, that all distinct ideas are separable in thought, assumes the question at issue.

But the question whether the idea of causation is necessary, or not, is really of very little importance. For, to say that an idea is necessary is simply to affirm that we cannot conceive the contrary; and the fact that we cannot conceive the contrary of any belief may be a presumption, but is certainly no proof, of its truth.

In the well-known experiment of touching a single round object, such as a marble, with crossed fingers, it is utterly impossible to conceive that we have not two round objects under them; and, though light is un-

doubtedly a mere sensation arising in the brain, it is utterly impossible to conceive that it is not outside the retina. In the same way, he who touches anything with a rod, not only is irresistibly led to believe that the sensation of contact is at the end of the rod, but is utterly incapable of conceiving that this sensation is really in his head. Yet that which is inconceivable is manifestly true in all these cases. The beliefs and the unbeliefs are alike necessary, and alike erroneous.

It is commonly urged that the axiom of causation cannot be derived from experience, because experience only proves that many things have causes, whereas the axiom declares that all things have causes. The syllogism, "many things which come into existence have causes, A has come into existence: therefore A had a cause," is obviously fallacious, if A is not previously shown to be one of the "many things." And this objection is perfectly sound so far as it goes. The axiom of causation cannot possibly be deduced from any general proposition which simply embodies experience. But it does not follow that the belief, or expectation, expressed by the axiom, is not a product of experience, generated antecedently to, and altogether independently of, the logically unjustifiable language in which we express it.

In fact, the axiom of causation resembles all other beliefs of expectation in being the verbal symbol of a purely automatic act of the mind, which is altogether extra-logical, and would be illogical, if it were not constantly verified by experience. Experience, as we have seen, stores up memories; memories generate expectations or beliefs—why they do so may be explained hereafter by proper investigation of cerebral physiology. But, to seek for the reason of the facts in the verbal

symbols by which they are expressed, and to be astonished that it is not to be found there, is surely singular; and what Hume did was to turn attention from the verbal proposition to the psychical fact of which it is the symbol.

"When any natural object or event is presented, it is impossible for us, by any sagacity or penetration, to discover, or even conjecture, without experience, what event will result from it, or to carry our foresight beyond that object, which is immediately present to the memory and senses. Even after one instance or experiment, where we have observed a particular event to follow upon another, we are not entitled to form a general rule, or foretell what will happen in like cases; it being justly esteemed an unpardonable temerity to judge of the whole course of nature from one single experiment, however accurate or certain. But when one particular species of events has always, in all instances, been conjoined with another, we make no longer any scruple of foretelling one upon the appearance of the other, and of employing that reasoning which can alone assure us of any matter of fact or existence. We then call the one object *Cause*, the other *Effect*. We suppose that there is some connexion between them: some power in the one, by which it infallibly produces the other, and operates with the greatest certainty and strongest necessity. . . . But there is nothing in a number of instances, different from every single instance, which is supposed to be exactly similar; except only, that after a repetition of similar instances, the mind is carried by habit, upon the appearance of one event, to expect its usual attendant, and to believe that it will exist. . . . The first time a man saw the communication of motion by impulse, as by the shock of two billiard balls, he could not pronounce that the one event was *connected*, but only that it was *conjoined*, with the other. After he has observed several instances of this nature, he then pronounces them to be *connected*. What alteration has happened to give rise to this new idea of *connexion*? Nothing but that he now

feels these events to be *connected* in his imagination, and can readily foresee the existence of the one from the appearance of the other. When we say, therefore, that one object is connected with another we mean only that they have acquired a connexion in our thought, and give rise to this inference, by which they become proofs of each other's existence; a conclusion which is somewhat extraordinary, but which seems founded on sufficient evidence."—(IV. pp. 87—89.)

In the fifteenth section of the third part of the *Treatise*, under the head of the *Rules by which to Judge of Causes and Effects*, Hume gives a sketch of the method of allocating effects to their causes, upon which, so far as I am aware, no improvement was made down to the time of the publication of Mill's *Logic*. Of Mill's four methods, that of *agreement* is indicated in the following passage :—

". . . where several different objects produce the same effect, it must be by means of some quality which we discover to be common amongst them. For as like effects imply like causes, we must always ascribe the causation to the circumstance wherein we discover the resemblance."—(I. p. 229.)

Next, the foundation of the *method of difference* is stated :—

"The difference in the the effects of two resembling objects must proceed from that particular in which they differ. For, as like causes always produce like effects, when in any instance we find our expectation to be disappointed, we must conclude that this irregularity proceeds from some difference in the causes."—(I. p. 230.)

In the succeeding paragraph the *method of concomitant variations* is foreshadowed.

"When any object increases or diminishes with the increase or diminution of the cause, 'tis to be regarded as a compounded effect, derived from the union of the several different effects which arise from the several different parts of the cause. The absence or presence of one part of the cause is here supposed to be always attended with the absence or presence of a proportionable part of the effect. This constant conjunction sufficiently proves that the one part is the cause of the other. We must, however, beware not to draw such a conclusion from a few experiments."—(I. p. 230.)

Lastly, the following rule, though awkwardly stated, contains a suggestion of the *method of residues*:—

". . . an object which exists for any time in its full perfection without any effect, is not the sole cause of that effect, but requires to be assisted by some other principle, which may forward its influence and operation. For as like effects necessarily follow from like causes, and in a contiguous time and place, their separation for a moment shows that these causes are not complete ones."—(I. p. 230.)

In addition to the bare notion of necessary connexion between the cause and its effect, we undoubtedly find in our minds the idea of something resident in the cause which, as we say, produces the effect, and we call this something Force, Power, or Energy. Hume explains Force and Power as the results of the association with inanimate causes of the feelings of endeavour or resistance which we experience, when our bodies give rise to, or resist, motion.

If I throw a ball, I have a sense of effort which ends when the ball leaves my hand; and, if I catch a ball, I have a sense of resistance which comes to an end with the quiescence of the ball. In the former case, there is a strong suggestion of something having gone from

myself into the ball; in the latter, of something having been received from the ball. Let any one hold a piece of iron near a strong magnet, and the feeling that the magnet endeavours to pull the iron one way in the same manner as he endeavours to pull it in the opposite direction, is very strong.

As Hume says:—

"No animal can put external bodies in motion without the sentiment of a *nisus*, or endeavour; and every animal has a sentiment or feeling from the stroke or blow of an external object that is in motion. These sensations, which are merely animal, and from which we can, *a priori*, draw no inference, we are apt to transfer to inanimate objects, and to suppose that they have some such feelings whenever they transfer or receive motion."—(IV. p. 91, *note*.)

It is obviously, however, an absurdity not less gross than that of supposing the sensation of warmth to exist in a fire, to imagine that the subjective sensation of effort or resistance in ourselves can be present in external objects, when they stand in the relation of causes to other objects.

To the argument, that we have a right to suppose the relation of cause and effect to contain something more than invariable succession, because, when we ourselves act as causes, or in volition, we are conscious of exerting power; Hume replies, that we know nothing of the feeling we call power except as effort or resistance; and that we have not the slightest means of knowing whether it has anything to do with the production of bodily motion or mental changes. And he points out, as Descartes and Spinoza had done before him, that when voluntary motion takes place, that which we will

is not the immediate consequence of the act of volition, but something which is separated from it by a long chain of causes and effects. If the will is the cause of the movement of a limb, it can be so only in the sense that the guard who gives the order to go on, is the cause of the transport of a train from one station to another.

"We learn from anatomy, that the immediate object of power in voluntary motion is not the member itself which is moved, but certain muscles and nerves and animal spirits, and perhaps something still more minute and unknown, through which the motion is successively propagated, ere it reach the member itself, whose motion is the immediate object of volition. Can there be a more certain proof that the power by which the whole operation is performed, so far from being directly and fully known by an inward sentiment or consciousness, is to the last degree mysterious and unintelligible? Here the mind wills a certain event: Immediately another event, unknown to ourselves, and totally different from the one intended, is produced: This event produces another equally unknown: Till at last, through a long succession, the desired event is produced." —(IV. p. 78.)

A still stronger argument against ascribing an objective existence to force or power, on the strength of our supposed direct intuition of power in voluntary acts, may be urged from the unquestionable fact, that we do not know, and cannot know, that volition does cause corporeal motion; while there is a great deal to be said in favour of the view that it is no cause, but merely a concomitant of that motion. But the nature of volition will be more fitly considered hereafter.

CHAPTER VII.

THE ORDER OF NATURE: MIRACLES.

If our beliefs of expectation are based on our beliefs of memory, and anticipation is only inverted recollection, it necessarily follows that every belief of expectation implies the belief that the future will have a certain resemblance to the past. From the first hour of experience, onwards, this belief is constantly being verified, until old age is inclined to suspect that experience has nothing new to offer. And when the experience of generation after generation is recorded, and a single book tells us more than Methuselah could have learned, had he spent every waking hour of his thousand years in learning; when apparent disorders are found to be only the recurrent pulses of a slow working order, and the wonder of a year becomes the commonplace of a century; when repeated and minute examination never reveals a break in the chain of causes and effects; and the whole edifice of practical life is built upon our faith in its continuity; the belief that that chain has never been broken and will never be broken, becomes one of the strongest and most justifiable of human convictions. And it must be admitted to be a reasonable request, if we ask those who would have us put faith in the actual occurrence of

interruptions of that order, to produce evidence in favour of their view, not only equal, but superior, in weight to that which leads us to adopt ours.

This is the essential argument of Hume's famous disquisition upon miracles; and it may safely be declared to be irrefragable. But it must be admitted that Hume has surrounded the kernel of his essay with a shell of very doubtful value.

The first step in this, as in all other discussions, is to come to a clear understanding as to the meaning of the terms employed. Argumentation whether miracles are possible, and, if possible, credible, is mere beating the air until the arguers have agreed what they mean by the word "miracles."

Hume, with less than his usual perspicuity, but in accordance with a common practice of believers in the miraculous, defines a miracle as a "violation of the laws of nature," or as "a transgression of a law of nature by a particular volition of the Deity, or by the interposition of some invisible agent."

There must, he says,—

"be an uniform experience against every miraculous event, otherwise the event would not merit that appellation. And as an uniform experience amounts to a proof, there is here a direct and full proof, from the nature of the fact, against the existence of any miracle; nor can such a proof be destroyed or the miracle rendered credible but by an opposite proof which is superior."—(IV. p. 134.)

Every one of these dicta appears to be open to serious objection.

The word "miracle"—*miraculum*,—in its primitive and legitimate sense, simply means something wonderful.

Cicero applies it as readily to the fancies of philosophers, "Portenta et miracula philosophorum somniantium," as we do to the prodigies of priests. And the source of the wonder which a miracle excites is the belief, on the part of those who witness it, that it transcends or contradicts ordinary experience.

The definition of a miracle as a "violation of the laws of nature" is, in reality, an employment of language which, on the face of the matter, cannot be justified. For "nature" means neither more nor less than that which is; the sum of phenomena presented to our experience; the totality of events past, present, and to come. Every event must be taken to be a part of nature, until proof to the contrary is supplied. And such proof is, from the nature of the case, impossible.

Hume asks:—

"Why is it more than probable that all men must die: that lead cannot of itself remain suspended in the air: that fire consumes wood and is extinguished by water; unless it be that these events are found agreeable to the laws of nature, and there is required a violation of those laws, or in other words, a miracle, to prevent them?"—(IV. p. 133.)

But the reply is obvious; not one of these events is "more than probable"; though the probability may reach such a very high degree that, in ordinary language, we are justified in saying that the opposite events are impossible. Calling our often verified experience a "law of nature" adds nothing to its value, nor in the slightest degree increases any probability that it will be verified again, which may arise out of the fact of its frequent verification.

If a piece of lead were to remain suspended of itself, in

the air, the occurrence would be a "miracle," in the sense of a wonderful event, indeed; but no one trained in the methods of science would imagine that any law of nature was really violated thereby. He would simply set to work to investigate the conditions under which so highly unexpected an occurrence took place, and thereby enlarge his experience and modify his hitherto unduly narrow conception of the laws of nature.

The alternative definition, that a miracle is "a transgression of a law of nature by a particular volition of the Deity, or by the interposition of some invisible agent," (IV. p. 134, *note*) is still less defensible. For a vast number of miracles have professedly been worked, neither by the Deity, nor by any invisible agent; but by Beelzebub and his compeers, or by very visible men.

Moreover, not to repeat what has been said respecting the absurdity of supposing that something which occurs is a transgression of laws, our only knowledge of which is derived from the observation of that which occurs; upon what sort of evidence can we be justified in concluding that a given event is the effect of a particular volition of the Deity, or of the interposition of some invisible (that is unperceivable) agent? It may be so, but how is the assertion, that it is so, to be tested? If it be said that the event exceeds the power of natural causes, what can justify such a saying? The day-fly has better grounds for calling a thunderstorm supernatural, than has man, with his experience of an infinitesimal fraction of duration, to say that the most astonishing event that can be imagined is beyond the scope of natural causes.

"Whatever is intelligible and can be distinctly conceived,

implies no contradiction, and can never be proved false by any demonstration, argument, or abstract reasoning *a priori*."
—(IV. p. 44.)

So wrote Hume, with perfect justice, in his *Sceptical Doubts*. But a miracle, in the sense of a sudden and complete change in the customary order of nature, is intelligible, can be distinctly conceived, implies no contradiction; and, therefore, according to Hume's own showing, cannot be proved false by any demonstrative argument.

Nevertheless, in diametrical contradiction to his own principles, Hume says elsewhere :—

"It is a miracle that a dead man should come to life: because that has never been observed in any age or country."
—(IV. p. 134.)

That is to say, there is an uniform experience against such an event, and therefore, if it occurs, it is a violation of the laws of nature. Or, to put the argument in its naked absurdity, that which never has happened never can happen, without a violation of the laws of nature. In truth, if a dead man did come to life, the fact would be evidence, not that any law of nature had been violated, but that those laws, even when they express the results of a very long and uniform experience, are necessarily based on incomplete knowledge, and are to be held only as grounds of more or less justifiable expectation.

To sum up, the definition of a miracle as a suspension or a contravention of the order of Nature is self-contradictory, because all we know of the order of nature is derived from our observation of the course of events of

which the so-called miracle is a part. On the other hand, no event is too extraordinary to be possible; and, therefore, if by the term miracles we mean only "extremely wonderful events," there can be no just ground for denying the possibility of their occurrence.

But when we turn from the question of the possibility of miracles, however they may be defined, in the abstract, to that respecting the grounds upon which we are justified in believing any particular miracle, Hume's arguments have a very different value, for they resolve themselves into a simple statement of the dictates of common sense—which may be expressed in this canon: the more a statement of fact conflicts with previous experience, the more complete must be the evidence which is to justify us in believing it. It is upon this principle that every one carries on the business of common life. If a man tells me he saw a piebald horse in Piccadilly, I believe him without hesitation. The thing itself is likely enough, and there is no imaginable motive for his deceiving me. But if the same person tells me he observed a zebra there, I might hesitate a little about accepting his testimony, unless I were well satisfied, not only as to his previous acquaintance with zebras, but as to his powers and opportunities of observation in the present case. If, however, my informant assured me that he beheld a centaur trotting down that famous thoroughfare, I should emphatically decline to credit his statement; and this even if he were the most saintly of men and ready to suffer martyrdom in support of his belief. In such a case, I could, of course, entertain no doubt of the good faith of the witness; it would be only his competency, which unfortunately has very little

to do with good faith or intensity of conviction, which I should presume to call in question.

Indeed, I hardly know what testimony would satisfy me of the existence of a live centaur. To put an extreme case, suppose the late Johannes Müller, of Berlin, the greatest anatomist and physiologist among my contemporaries, had barely affirmed he had seen a live centaur, I should certainly have been staggered by the weight of an assertion coming from such an authority. But I could have got no further than a suspension of judgment. For, on the whole, it would have been more probable that even he had fallen into some error of interpretation of the facts which came under his observation, than that such an animal as a centaur really existed. And nothing short of a careful monograph, by a highly competent investigator, accompanied by figures and measurements of all the most important parts of a centaur, put forth under circumstances which could leave no doubt that falsification or misinterpretation would meet with immediate exposure, could possibly enable a man of science to feel that he acted conscientiously, in expressing his belief in the existence of a centaur on the evidence of testimony.

This hesitation about admitting the existence of such an animal as a centaur, be it observed, does not deserve reproach, as scepticism, but moderate praise, as mere scientific good faith. It need not imply, and it does not, so far as I am concerned, any *a priori* hypothesis that a centaur is an impossible animal; or, that his existence, if he did exist, would violate the laws of nature. Indubitably, the organisation of a centaur presents a variety of practical difficulties to an anatomist and physiologist; and a good many of those generalisations

of our present experience, which we are pleased to call laws of nature, would be upset by the appearance of such an animal, so that we should have to frame new laws to cover our extended experience. Every wise man will admit that the possibilities of nature are infinite, and include centaurs; but he will not the less feel it his duty to hold fast, for the present, by the dictum of Lucretius, "Nam certe ex vivo Centauri non fit imago," and to cast the entire burthen of proof, that centaurs exist, on the shoulders of those who ask him to believe the statement.

Judged by the canons either of common sense, or of science, which are indeed one and the same, all "miracles" are centaurs, or they would not be miracles; and men of sense and science will deal with them on the same principles. No one who wishes to keep well within the limits of that which he has a right to assert will affirm that it is impossible that the sun and moon should ever have been made to appear to stand still in the valley of Ajalon; or that the walls of a city should have fallen down at a trumpet blast; or that water was turned into wine; because such events are contrary to uniform experience and violate laws of nature. For aught he can prove to the contrary, such events may appear in the order of nature to-morrow. But common sense and common honesty alike oblige him to demand from those who would have him believe in the actual occurrence of such events, evidence of a cogency proportionate to their departure from probability; evidence at least as strong as that, which the man who says he has seen a centaur is bound to produce, unless he is content to be thought either more than credulous or less than honest.

But are there any miracles on record, the evidence for which fulfils the plain and simple requirements alike of elementary logic and of elementary morality?

Hume answers this question without the smallest hesitation, and with all the authority of a historical specialist:—

"There is not to be found, in all history, any miracle attested by a sufficient number of men, of such unquestioned goodness, education, and learning, as to secure us against all delusion in themselves; of such undoubted integrity, as to place them beyond all suspicion of any design to deceive others; of such credit and reputation in the eyes of mankind, as to have a great deal to lose in case of their being detected in any falsehood; and at the same time attesting facts, performed in such a public manner, and in so celebrated a part of the world, as to render the detection unavoidable: All which circumstances are requisite to give us a full assurance of the testimony of men."—(IV. p. 135.)

These are grave assertions, but they are least likely to be challenged by those who have made it their business to weigh evidence and to give their decision under a due sense of the moral responsibility which they incur in so doing.

It is probable that few persons who proclaim their belief in miracles have considered what would be necessary to justify that belief in the case of a professed modern miracle-worker. Suppose, for example, it is affirmed that A.B. died and that C.D. brought him to life again. Let it be granted that A.B. and C.D. are persons of unimpeachable honour and veracity; that C.D. is the next heir to A.B.'s estate, and therefore had a strong motive for not bringing him to life again; and

that all A.B.'s relations, respectable persons who bore him a strong affection, or had otherwise an interest in his being alive, declared that they saw him die. Furthermore, let A.B. be seen after his recovery by all his friends and neighbours, and let his and their depositions, that he is now alive, be taken down before a magistrate of known integrity and acuteness: would all this constitute even presumptive evidence that C.D. had worked a miracle? Unquestionably not. For the most important link in the whole chain of evidence is wanting, and that is the proof that A.B. was really dead. The evidence of ordinary observers on such a point as this is absolutely worthless. And, even medical evidence, unless the physician is a person of unusual knowledge and skill, may have little more value. Unless careful thermometric observation proves that the temperature has sunk below a certain point; unless the cadaveric stiffening of the muscles has become well established; all the ordinary signs of death may be fallacious, and the intervention of C.D. may have had no more to do with A.B.'s restoration to life than any other fortuitously coincident event.

It may be said that such a coincidence would be more wonderful than the miracle itself. Nevertheless history acquaints us with coincidences as marvellous.

On the 19th of February, 1842, Sir Robert Sale held Jellalabad with a small English force and, daily expecting attack from an overwhelming force of Afghans, had spent three months in incessantly labouring to improve the fortifications of the town. Akbar Khan had approached within a few miles, and an onslaught of his army was supposed to be imminent. That morning an earthquake—

"nearly destroyed the town, threw down the greater part of the parapets, the central gate with the adjoining bastions, and a part of the new bastion which flanked it. Three other bastions were also nearly destroyed, whilst several large breaches were made in the curtains, and the Peshawur side, eighty feet long, was quite practicable, the ditch being filled, and the descent easy. Thus in one moment the labours of three months were in a great measure destroyed." [1]

If Akbar Khan had happened to give orders for an assault in the early morning of the 19th of February, what good follower of the Prophet could have doubted that Allah had lent his aid? As it chanced, however, Mahometan faith in the miraculous took another turn; for the energetic defenders of the post had repaired the damage by the end of the month; and the enemy, finding no signs of the earthquake when they invested the place, ascribed the supposed immunity of Jellalabad to English witchcraft.

But the conditions of belief do not vary with time or place; and, if it is undeniable that evidence of so complete and weighty a character is needed, at the present time, for the establishment of the occurrence of such a wonder as that supposed, it has always been needful. Those who study the extant records of miracles with due attention will judge for themselves how far it has ever been supplied.

[1] Report of Captain Broadfoot, garrison engineer, quoted in Kaye's *Afghanistan*.

CHAPTER VIII.

THEISM; EVOLUTION OF THEOLOGY.

HUME seems to have had but two hearty dislikes: the one to the English nation, and the other to all the professors of dogmatic theology. The one aversion he vented only privately to his friends; but, if he is ever bitter in his public utterances, it is against priests[1] in general and theological enthusiasts and fanatics in particular; if he ever seems insincere, it is when he wishes to insult theologians by a parade of sarcastic respect. One need go no further than the peroration of the *Essay on Miracles* for a characteristic illustration.

"I am the better pleased with the method of reasoning here delivered, as I think it may serve to confound those dangerous friends and disguised enemies to the *Christian religion* who have undertaken to defend it by the principles

[1] In a note to the Essay on Superstition and Enthusiasm, Hume is careful to define what he means by this term. "By priests I understand only the pretenders to power and dominion, and to a superior sanctity of character, distinct from virtue and good morals. These are very different from *clergymen*, who are set apart to the care of sacred matters, and the conducting our public devotions with greater decency and order. There is no rank of men more to be respected than the latter."—(III. p. 83.)

of human reason. Our most holy religion is founded on *Faith*, not on reason, and it is a sure method of exposing it to put it to such a trial as it is by no means fitted to endure. . . . the Christian religion not only was at first attended with miracles, but even at this day cannot be believed by any reasonable person without one. Mere reason is insufficient to convince us of its veracity: And whoever is moved by *Faith* to assent to it, is conscious of a continual miracle in his own person, which subverts all the principles of his understanding, and gives him a determination to believe what is most contrary to custom and experience."—(IV. pp. 153, 154.)

It is obvious that, here and elsewhere, Hume, adopting a popular confusion of ideas, uses religion as the equivalent of dogmatic theology; and, therefore, he says, with perfect justice, that "religion is nothing but a species of philosophy" (iv. p. 171). Here no doubt lies the root of his antagonism. The quarrels of theologians and philosophers have not been about religion, but about philosophy; and philosophers not unfrequently seem to entertain the same feeling towards theologians that sportsmen cherish towards poachers. "There cannot be two passions more nearly resembling each other than hunting and philosophy," says Hume. And philosophic hunters are given to think, that, while they pursue truth for its own sake, out of pure love for the chase (perhaps mingled with a little human weakness to be thought good shots), and by open and legitimate methods; their theological competitors too often care merely to supply the market of establishments; and disdain neither the aid of the snares of superstition, nor the cover of the darkness of ignorance.

Unless some foundation was given for this impression by the theological writers whose works had fallen in Hume's way, it is difficult to account for the depth of

feeling which so good natured a man manifests on the subject.

Thus he writes in the *Natural History of Religion*, with quite unusual acerbity :—

"The chief objection to it [the ancient heathen mythology] with regard to this planet is, that it is not ascertained by any just reason or authority. The ancient tradition insisted on by heathen priests and theologers is but a weak foundation: and transmitted also such a number of contradictory reports, supported all of them by equal authority, that it became absolutely impossible to fix a preference among them. A few volumes, therefore, must contain all the polemical writings of pagan priests: And their whole theology must consist more of traditional stories and superstitious practices than of philosophical argument and controversy.

"But where theism forms the fundamental principle of any popular religion, that tenet is so conformable to sound reason, that philosophy is apt to incorporate itself with such a system of theology. And if the other dogmas of that system be contained in a sacred book, such as the Alcoran, or be determined by any visible authority, like that of the Roman pontiff, speculative reasoners naturally carry on their assent, and embrace a theory, which has been instilled into them by their earliest education, and which also possesses some degree of consistence and uniformity. But as these appearances are sure, all of them, to prove deceitful, philosophy will very soon find herself very unequally yoked with her new associate; and instead of regulating each principle, as they advance together, she is at every turn perverted to serve the purposes of superstition. For besides the unavoidable incoherences, which must be reconciled and adjusted, one may safely affirm, that all popular theology, especially the scholastic, has a kind of appetite for absurdity and contradiction. If that theology went not beyond reason and common sense, her doctrines would appear too easy and familiar. Amazement must of necessity be raised: Mystery affected: Darkness and obscurity sought after: And a foundation of merit afforded to the

devout votaries, who desire an opportunity of subduing their rebellious reason by the belief of the most unintelligible sophisms.

"Ecclesiastical history sufficiently confirms these reflections. When a controversy is started, some people always pretend with certainty to foretell the issue. Whichever opinion, say they, is most contrary to plain reason is sure to prevail; even when the general interest of the system requires not that decision. Though the reproach of heresy may, for some time, be bandied about among the disputants, it always rests at last on the side of reason. Any one, it is pretended, that has but learning enough of this kind to know the definition of *Arian*, *Pelagian*, *Erastian*, *Socinian*, *Sabellian*, *Eutychian*, *Nestorian*, *Monothelite*, &c., not to mention *Protestant*, whose fate is yet uncertain, will be convinced of the truth of this observation. It is thus a system becomes absurd in the end, merely from its being reasonable and philosophical in the beginning.

"To oppose the torrent of scholastic religion by such feeble maxims as these, that *it is impossible for the same thing to be and not to be*, that *the whole is greater than a part*, that *two and three make five*, is pretending to stop the ocean with a bulrush. Will you set up profane reason against sacred mystery? No punishment is great enough for your impiety. And the same fires which were kindled for heretics will serve also for the destruction of philosophers."—(IV. pp. 481—3.)

Holding these opinions respecting the recognised systems of theology and their professors, Hume, nevertheless, seems to have had a theology of his own; that is to say, he seems to have thought (though, as will appear, it is needful for an expositor of his opinions to speak very guardedly on this point) that the problem of theism is susceptible of scientific treatment, with something more than a negative result. His opinions are to be gathered from the eleventh section of the *Inquiry* (1748); from the *Dialogues concerning Natural Religion*, which were written at least as early as 1751, though not

published till after his death; and from the *Natural History of Religion*, published in 1757.

In the first two pieces, the reader is left to judge for himself which interlocutor in the dialogue represents the thoughts of the author; but, for the views put forward in the last, Hume accepts the responsibility. Unfortunately, this essay deals almost wholly with the historical development of theological ideas; and, on the question of the philosophical foundation of theology, does little more than express the writer's contentment with the argument from design.

"The whole frame of nature bespeaks an Intelligent Author; and no rational inquirer can, after serious reflection, suspend his belief a moment with regard to the primary principles of genuine Theism and Religion.—(IV. p. 435.)

"Were men led into the apprehension of invisible, intelligent power, by a contemplation of the works of nature, they could never possibly entertain any conception but of one single being, who bestowed existence and order on this vast machine, and adjusted all its parts according to one regular plan or connected system. For though, to persons of a certain turn of mind, it may not appear altogether absurd, that several independent beings, endowed with superior wisdom, might conspire in the contrivance and execution of one regular plan, yet is this a merely arbitrary supposition, which, even if allowed possible, must be confessed neither to be supported by probability nor necessity. All things in the universe are evidently of a piece. Everything is adjusted to everything. One design prevails throughout the whole. And this uniformity leads the mind to acknowledge one author; because the conception of different authors, without any distinction of attributes or operations, serves only to give perplexity to the imagination, without bestowing any satisfaction on the understanding."—(IV. p. 442.)

Thus Hume appears to have sincerely accepted the

two fundamental conclusions of the argument from design; firstly, that a Deity exists; and, secondly, that He possesses attributes more or less allied to those of human intelligence. But, at this embryonic stage of theology, Hume's progress is arrested; and, after a survey of the development of dogma, his "general corollary" is, that—

"The whole is a riddle, an enigma, an inexplicable mystery. Doubt, uncertainty, suspense of judgment, appear the only result of our most accurate scrutiny concerning this subject. But such is the frailty of human reason, and such the irresistible contagion of opinion, that even this deliberate doubt could scarcely be upheld; did we not enlarge our view, and opposing one species of superstition to another, set them a quarrelling; while we ourselves, during their fury and contention, happily make our escape into the calm, though obscure, regions of philosophy."—(IV. p. 513.)

Thus it may be fairly presumed that Hume expresses his own sentiments in the words of the speech with which Philo concludes the *Dialogues*.

"If the whole of natural theology, as some people seem to maintain, resolves itself into one simple, though somewhat ambiguous, at least undefined proposition, *That the cause or causes of order in the universe probably bear some remote analogy to human intelligence:* If this proposition be not capable of extension, variation, or more particular explication: If it affords no inference that affects human life or can be the source of any action or forbearance: And if the analogy, imperfect as it is, can be carried no further than to the human intelligence, and cannot be transferred, with any appearance of probability, to the other qualities of the mind; if this really be the case, what can the most inquisitive, contemplative, and religious man do more than give a plain, philosophical assent to the proposition, as often as it occurs, and believe

that the arguments on which it is established exceed the objections which lie against it? Some astonishment indeed will naturally arise from the greatness of the object; some melancholy from its obscurity; some contempt of human reason, that it can give no solution more satisfactory with regard to so extraordinary and magnificent a question. But believe me, Cleanthes, the most natural sentiment which a well-disposed mind will feel on this occasion, is a longing desire and expectation that Heaven would be pleased to dissipate, at least alleviate, this profound ignorance, by affording some more particular revelation to mankind, and making discoveries of the nature, attributes, and operations of the Divine object of our faith." [1]—(II. pp. 547—8.)

Such being the sum total of Hume's conclusions, it cannot be said that his theological burden is a heavy one. But, if we turn from the *Natural History of Religion*, to the *Treatise*, the *Inquiry*, and the *Dialogues*, the story of what happened to the ass laden with salt, who took to the water, irresistibly suggests itself. Hume's theism, such as it is, dissolves away in the dialectic river, until nothing is left but the verbal sack in which it was contained.

Of the two theistic propositions to which Hume is committed, the first is the affirmation of the existence of a God, supported by the argument from the nature of

[1] It is needless to quote the rest of the passage, though I cannot refrain from observing that the recommendation which it contains, that a "man of letters" should become a philosophical sceptic as "the first and most essential step towards being a sound believing Christian," though adopted and largely acted upon by many a champion of orthodoxy in these days, is questionable in taste, if it be meant as a jest, and more than questionable in morality, if it is to be taken in earnest. To pretend that you believe any doctrine for no better reason than that you doubt everything else, would be dishonest, if it were not preposterous.

causation. In the *Dialogues*, Philo, while pushing scepticism to its utmost limit, is nevertheless made to say that—

"... where reasonable men treat these subjects, the question can never be concerning the *Being*, but only the *Nature*, of the Deity. The former truth, as you will observe, is unquestionable and self-evident. Nothing exists without a cause, and the original cause of this universe (whatever it be) we call God, and piously ascribe to him every species of perfection." —(II. p. 439.)

The expositor of Hume, who wishes to do his work thoroughly, as far as it goes, cannot but fall into perplexity[1] when he contrasts this language with that of

[1] A perplexity which is increased rather than diminished by some passages in a letter to Gilbert Elliot of Minto (March 10, 1751). Hume says, "You would perceive by the sample I have given you that I make Cleanthes the hero of the dialogue; whatever you can think of, to strengthen that side of the argument, will be most acceptable to me. Any propensity you imagine I have to the other side crept in upon me against my will; and 'tis not long ago that I burned an old manuscript book, wrote before I was twenty, which contained, page after page, the gradual progress of my thoughts on this head. It began with an anxious scent after arguments to confirm the common opinion; doubts stole in, dissipated, returned; were again dissipated, returned again; and it was a perpetual struggle of a restless imagination against inclination—perhaps against reason. ... I could wish Cleanthes' argument could be so analysed as to be rendered quite formal and regular. The propensity of the mind towards it—unless that propensity were as strong and universal as that to believe in our senses and experience—will still, I am afraid, be esteemed a suspicious foundation. 'Tis here I wish for your assistance. We must endeavour to prove that this propensity is somewhat different from our inclination to find our own figures in the clouds, our faces in the moon, our passions and sentiments even in inanimate matter. Such an inclination may and ought to be controlled, and can never be a legitimate ground of assent." (Burton, *Life*, I. pp. 331—3.) The picture of Hume here

the sections of the third part of the *Treatise*, entitled, *Why a Cause is Always Necessary*, and *Of the Idea of Necessary Connexion*.

It is there shown, at large, that "every demonstration which has been produced for the necessity of a cause is fallacious and sophistical" (I. p. 111); it is affirmed, that "there is no absolute nor metaphysical necessity that every beginning of existence should be attended with such an object" [as a cause] (I. p. 227); and it is roundly asserted, that it is "easy for us to conceive any object to be non-existent this moment and existent the next, without conjoining to it the distinct idea of a cause or productive principle" (I. p. 111). So far from the axiom, that whatever begins to exist must have a cause of existence, being "self-evident," as Philo calls it, Hume spends the greatest care in showing that it is nothing but the product of custom, or experience.

And the doubt thus forced upon one, whether Philo ought to be taken as even, so far, Hume's mouthpiece, is increased when we reflect that we are dealing with an acute reasoner; and that there is no difficulty in drawing the deduction from Hume's own definition of a cause, that the very phrase, a "first cause," involves a contradiction in terms. He lays down that,—

"'Tis an established axiom both in natural and moral philosophy, that an object, which exists for any time in its full perfection without producing another, is not its sole cause; but is assisted by some other principle which pushes it from its state of inactivity, and makes it exert that energy, of which it was secretly possessed."—(I. p. 106.)

drawn unconsciously by his own hand, is unlike enough to the popular conception of him as a careless sceptic loving doubt for doubt's sake.

Now the "first cause" is assumed to have existed from all eternity, up to the moment at which the universe came into existence. Hence it cannot be the sole cause of the universe; in fact, it was no cause at all until it was "assisted by some other principle"; consequently the so-called "first cause," so far as it produces the universe, is in reality an effect of that other principle. Moreover, though, in the person of Philo, Hume assumes the axiom "that whatever begins to exist must have a cause," which he denies in the *Treatise*, he must have seen, for a child may see, that the assumption is of no real service.

Suppose Y to be the imagined first cause and Z to be its effect. Let the letters of the alphabet, *a*, *b*, *c*, *d*, *e*, *f*, *g*, in their order, represent successive moments of time, and let *g* represent the particular moment at which the effect Z makes its appearance. It follows that the cause Y could not have existed "in its full perfection" during the time *a*—*e*, for if it had, then the effect Z would have come into existence during that time, which, by the hypothesis, it did not do. The cause Y, therefore, must have come into existence at *f*, and if "everything that comes into existence has a cause," Y must have had a cause X operating at *e*; X, a cause W operating at *d*; and, so on, *ad infinitum*.[1]

If the only demonstrative argument for the existence of a Deity, which Hume advances, thus, literally, "goes

[1] Kant employs substantially the same argument:—"Würde das höchste Wesen in dieser Kette der Bedingungen stehen, so würde es selbst ein Glied der Reihe derselben sein, und eben so wie die niederen Glieder, denen es vorgesetzt ist, noch fernere Untersuchungen wegen seines noch höheren Grundes erfahren."—*Kritik*. Ed. Hartenstein, p. 422.

to water" in the solvent of his philosophy, the reasoning from the evidence of design does not fare much better If Hume really knew of any valid reply to Philo's arguments in the following passages of the *Dialogues*, he has dealt unfairly by the reader in concealing it:—

"But because I know you are not much swayed by names and authorities, I shall endeavour to show you, a little more distinctly, the inconveniences of that Anthropomorphism, which you have embraced; and shall prove, that there is no ground to suppose a plan of the world to be formed in the Divine mind, consisting of distinct ideas, differently arranged, in the same manner as an architect forms in his head the plan of a house which he intends to execute.

"It is not easy, I own, to see what is gained by this supposition, whether we judge the matter by *Reason* or by *Experience*. We are still obliged to mount higher, in order to find the cause of this cause, which you had assigned as satisfactory and conclusive.

"If *Reason* (I mean abstract reason, derived from inquiries *a priori*) be not alike mute with regard to all questions concerning cause and effect, this sentence at least it will venture to pronounce: That a mental world, or universe of ideas, requires a cause as much as does a material world, or universe of objects; and, if similar in its arrangement, must require a similar cause. For what is there in this subject, which should occasion a different conclusion or inference? In an abstract view, they are entirely alike; and no difficulty attends the one supposition, which is not common to both of them.

"Again, when we will needs force *Experience* to pronounce some sentence, even on those subjects which lie beyond her sphere, neither can she perceive any material difference in this particular, between these two kinds of worlds; but finds them to be governed by similar principles, and to depend upon an equal variety of causes in their operations. We have specimens in miniature of both of them. Our own mind resembles the one; a vegetable or animal body the

other. Let experience, therefore, judge from these samples. Nothing seems more delicate, with regard to its causes, than thought: and as these causes never operate in two persons after the same manner, so we never find two persons who think exactly alike. Nor indeed does the same person think exactly alike at any two different periods of time. A difference of age, of the disposition of his body, of weather, of food, of company, of books, of passions; any of these particulars, or others more minute, are sufficient to alter the curious machinery of thought, and communicate to it very different movements and operations. As far as we can judge, vegetables and animal bodies are not more delicate in their motions, nor depend upon a greater variety or more curious adjustment of springs and principles.

"How, therefore, shall we satisfy ourselves concerning the cause of that Being whom you suppose the Author of Nature, or, according to your system of anthropomorphism, the ideal world in which you trace the material? Have we not the same reason to trace the ideal world into another ideal world, or new intelligent principle? But if we stop and go no farther; why go so far? Why not stop at the material world? How can we satisfy ourselves without going on *in infinitum?* And after all, what satisfaction is there in that infinite progression? Let us remember the story of the Indian philosopher and his elephant. It was never more applicable than to the present subject. If the material world rests upon a similar ideal world, this ideal world must rest upon some other; and so on without end. It were better, therefore, never to look beyond the present material world. By supposing it to contain the principle of its order within itself, we really assert it to be God; and the sooner we arrive at that Divine Being, so much the better. When you go one step beyond the mundane system you only excite an inquisitive humour, which it is impossible ever to satisfy.

"To say, that the different ideas which compose the reason of the Supreme Being, fall into order of themselves and by their own natures, is really to talk without any precise meaning. If it has a meaning, I would fain know why it is not

as good sense to say, that the parts of the material world fall into order of themselves, and by their own nature. Can the one opinion be intelligible while the other is not so?" —(II. pp. 461—4.)

Cleanthes, in replying to Philo's discourse, says that it is very easy to answer his arguments; but, as not unfrequently happens with controversialists, he mistakes a reply for an answer, when he declares that —

"The order and arrangement of nature, the curious adjustment of final causes, the plain use and intention of every part and organ; all these bespeak in the clearest language one intelligent cause or author. The heavens and the earth join in the same testimony. The whole chorus of nature raises one hymn to the praises of its Creator."—(II. p. 465.)

Though the rhetoric of Cleanthes may be admired, its irrelevancy to the point at issue must be admitted. Wandering still further into the region of declamation, he works himself into a passion:

"You alone, or almost alone, disturb this general harmony. You start abstruse doubts, cavils, and objections: You ask me what is the cause of this cause? I know not: I care not: that concerns not me. I have found a Deity; and here I stop my inquiry. Let those go further who are wiser or more enterprising."—(II. p. 466.)

In other words, O Cleanthes, reasoning having taken you as far as you want to go, you decline to advance any further; even though you fully admit that the very same reasoning forbids you to stop where you are pleased to cry halt! But this is simply forcing your reason to abdicate in favour of your caprice. It is impossible to imagine that Hume, of all men in the world, could have rested satisfied with such an act of high-treason against

the sovereignty of philosophy. We may rather conclude that the last word of the discussion, which he gives to Philo, is also his own.

"If I am still to remain in utter ignorance of causes, and can absolutely give an explication of nothing, I shall never esteem it any advantage to shove off for a moment a difficulty, which, you acknowledge, must immediately, in its full force, recur upon me. Naturalists[1] indeed very justly explain particular effects by more general causes, though these general causes should remain in the end totally inexplicable; but they never surely thought it satisfactory to explain a particular effect by a particular cause, which was no more to be accounted for than the effect itself. An ideal system, arranged of itself, without a precedent design, is not a whit more explicable than a material one, which attains its order in a like manner; nor is there any more difficulty in the latter supposition than in the former." – (II. p. 466.)

It is obvious that, if Hume had been pushed, he must have admitted that his opinion concerning the existence of a God, and of a certain remote resemblance of his intellectual nature to that of man, was an hypothesis which might possess more or less probability, but was incapable on his own principles of any approach to demonstration. And to all attempts to make any practical use of his theism; or to prove the existence of the attributes of infinite wisdom, benevolence, justice, and the like, which are usually ascribed to the Deity, by reason, he opposes a searching critical negation.[2]

The object of the speech of the imaginary Epicurean in the eleventh section of the *Inquiry*, entitled *Of a*

[1] *I.e.* Natural philosophers.

[2] Hume's letter to Mure of Caldwell, containing a criticism of Leechman's sermon (Burton, I. p. 163), bears strongly on this point.

Particular Providence and of a Future State, is to invert the argument of Bishop Butler's *Analogy*.

That famous defence of theology against the *a priori* scepticism of Freethinkers of the eighteenth century, who based their arguments on the inconsistency of the revealed scheme of salvation with the attributes of the Deity, consists, essentially, in conclusively proving that, from a moral point of view, Nature is at least as reprehensible as orthodoxy. If you tell me, says Butler, in effect, that any part of revealed religion must be false because it is inconsistent with the divine attributes of justice and mercy; I beg leave to point out to you, that there are undeniable natural facts which are fully open to the same objection. Since you admit that nature is the work of God, you are forced to allow that such facts are consistent with his attributes. Therefore, you must also admit, that the parallel facts in the scheme of orthodoxy are also consistent with them, and all your arguments to the contrary fall to the ground. Q.E.D. In fact, the solid sense of Butler left the Deism of the Freethinkers not a leg to stand upon. Perhaps, however, he did not remember the wise saying that "A man seemeth right in his own cause, but another cometh after and judgeth him." Hume's Epicurean philosopher adopts the main arguments of the *Analogy*, but unfortunately drives them home to a conclusion of which the good Bishop would hardly have approved.

"I deny a Providence, you say, and supreme governor of the world, who guides the course of events, and punishes the vicious with infamy and disappointment, and rewards the virtuous with honour and success in all their undertakings. But surely I deny not the course itself of events, which lies open to every one's inquiry and examination. I acknowledge

that, in the present order of things, virtue is attended with more peace of mind than vice, and meets with a more favourable reception from the world. I am sensible that, according to the past experience of mankind, friendship is the chief joy of human life, and moderation the only source of tranquillity and happiness. I never balance between the virtuous and the vicious course of life; but am sensible that, to a well-disposed mind, every advantage is on the side of the former. And what can you say more, allowing all your suppositions and reasonings? You tell me, indeed, that this disposition of things proceeds from intelligence and design. But, whatever it proceeds from, the disposition itself, on which depends our happiness and misery, and consequently our conduct and deportment in life, is still the same. It is still open for me, as well as you, to regulate my behaviour by my experience of past events. And if you affirm that, while a divine providence is allowed, and a supreme distributive justice in the universe, I ought to expect some more particular reward of the good, and punishment of the bad, beyond the ordinary course of events, I here find the same fallacy which I have before endeavoured to detect. You persist in imagining, that if we grant that divine existence for which you so earnestly contend, you may safely infer consequences from it, and add something to the experienced order of nature, by arguing from the attributes which you ascribe to your gods. You seem not to remember that all your reasonings on this subject can only be drawn from effects to causes; and that every argument, deduced from causes to effects, must of necessity be a gross sophism, since it is impossible for you to know anything of the cause, but what you have antecedently not inferred, but discovered to the full, in the effect.

"But what must a philosopher think of those vain reasoners who, instead of regarding the present scene of things as the sole object of their contemplation, so far reverse the whole course of nature, as to render this life merely a passage to something further; a porch, which leads to a greater and vastly different building; a prologue which serves only to introduce the piece, and give it more grace and propriety?

Whence, do you think, can such philosophers derive their idea of the gods? From their own conceit and imagination surely. For if they derive it from the present phenomena, it would never point to anything further, but must be exactly adjusted to them. That the divinity may *possibly* be endowed with attributes which we have never seen exerted; may be governed by principles of action which we cannot discover to be satisfied; all this will freely be allowed. But still this is mere *possibility* and hypothesis. We never can have reason to *infer* any attributes or any principles of action in him, but so far as we know them to have been exerted and satisfied.

"*Are there any marks of a distributive justice in the world?* If you answer in the affirmative, I conclude that, since justice here exerts itself, it is satisfied. If you reply in the negative, I conclude that you have then no reason to ascribe justice, in our sense of it, to the gods. If you hold a medium between affirmation and negation, by saying that the justice of the gods at present exerts itself in part, but not in its full extent, I answer that you have no reason to give it any particular extent, but only so far as you see it, *at present*, exert itself." (IV. pp. 164—6.)

Thus, the Freethinkers said, the attributes of the Deity being what they are, the scheme of orthodoxy is inconsistent with them; whereupon Butler gave the crushing reply: Agreeing with you as to the attributes of the Deity, nature, by its existence, proves that the things to which you object are quite consistent with them. To whom enters Hume's Epicurean with the remark: Then, as nature is our only measure of the attributes of the Deity in their practical manifestation, what warranty is there for supposing that such measure is anywhere transcended? That the "other side" of nature, if there be one, is governed on different principles from this side?

Truly on this topic silence is golden; while speech

reaches not even the dignity of sounding brass or tinkling cymbal, and is but the weary clatter of an endless logomachy. One can but suspect that Hume also had reached this conviction; and that his shadowy and inconsistent theism was the expression of his desire to rest in a state of mind, which distinctly excluded negation, while it included as little as possible of affirmation, respecting a problem which he felt to be hopelessly insoluble.

But, whatever might be the views of the philosopher as to the arguments for theism, the historian could have no doubt respecting its many-shaped existence, and the great part which it has played in the world. Here, then, was a body of natural facts to be investigated scientifically, and the result of Hume's inquiries is embodied in the remarkable essay on the *Natural History of Religion*. Hume anticipated the results of modern investigation in declaring fetishism and polytheism to be the form in which savage and ignorant men naturally clothe their ideas of the unknown influences which govern their destiny; and they are polytheists rather than monotheists because,—

". . . the first ideas of religion arose, not from a contemplation of the works of nature, but from a concern with regard to the events of life, and from the incessant hopes and fears which actuate the human mind. . . . in order to carry men's attention beyond the present course of things, or lead them into any inference concerning invisible intelligent power, they must be actuated by some passion which prompts their thought and reflection, some motive which urges their first inquiry. But what passion shall we have recourse to, for explaining an effect of such mighty consequence? Not speculative curiosity merely, or the pure love of truth. That motive is too refined for

such gross apprehensions, and would lead men into inquiries concerning the frame of nature, a subject too large and comprehensive for their narrow capacities. No passions, therefore, can be supposed to work on such barbarians, but the ordinary affections of human life; the anxious concern for happiness, the dread of future misery, the terror of death, the thirst of revenge, the appetite for food and other necessaries. Agitated by hopes and fears of this nature, especially the latter, men scrutinize, with a trembling curiosity, the course of future causes, and examine the various and contrary events of human life. And in this disordered scene, with eyes still more disordered and astonished, they see the first obscure traces of divinity."—(IV. pp. 443, 4.)

The shape assumed by these first traces of divinity is that of the shadows of men's own minds, projected out of themselves by their imaginations:—

"There is an universal tendency among mankind to conceive all beings like themselves, and to transfer to every object those qualities with which they are familiarly acquainted, and of which they are intimately conscious. . . . The *unknown causes* which continually employ their thought, appearing always in the same aspect, are all apprehended to be of the same kind or species. Nor is it long before we ascribe to them thought, and reason, and passion, and sometimes even the limbs and figures of men, in order to bring them nearer to a resemblance with ourselves."—(IV. pp. 446—7.)

Hume asks whether polytheism really deserves the name of theism.

"Our ancestors in Europe, before the revival of letters, believed as we do at present, that there was one supreme God, the author of nature, whose power, though in itself uncontrollable, was yet often exerted by the interposition of his angels and subordinate ministers, who executed his sacred purposes. But they also believed, that all nature was full of other invisible powers: fairies, goblins, elves, sprights;

beings stronger and mightier than men, but much inferior to the celestial natures who surround the throne of God. Now, suppose that any one, in these ages, had denied the existence of God and of his angels, would not his impiety justly have deserved the appellation of atheism, even though he had still allowed, by some odd capricious reasoning, that the popular stories of elves and fairies were just and well grounded? The difference, on the one hand, between such a person and a genuine theist, is infinitely greater than that, on the other, between him and one that absolutely excludes all invisible intelligent power. And it is a fallacy, merely from the casual resemblance of names, without any conformity of meaning, to rank such opposite opinions under the same denomination.

"To any one who considers justly of the matter, it will appear that the gods of the polytheists are no better than the elves and fairies of our ancestors, and merit as little as any pious worship and veneration. These pretended religionists are really a kind of superstitious atheists, and acknowledge no being that corresponds to our idea of a Deity. No first principle of mind or thought; no supreme government and administration; no divine contrivance or intention in the fabric of the world."—(IV. pp. 450—51.)

The doctrine that you may call an atheist anybody whose ideas about the Deity do not correspond with your own, is so largely acted upon by persons who are certainly not of Hume's way of thinking and, probably, so far from having read him, would shudder to open any book bearing his name, except the *History of England*, that it is surprising to trace the theory of their practice to such a source.

But on thinking the matter over, this theory seems so consonant with reason, that one feels ashamed of having suspected many excellent persons of being moved by mere malice and viciousness of temper to call other folks atheists, when, after all, they have been

obeying a purely intellectual sense of fitness. As Hume says, truly enough, it is a mere fallacy, because two people use the same names for things, the ideas of which are mutually exclusive, to rank such opposite opinions under the same denomination. If the Jew says, that the Deity is absolute unity, and that it is sheer blasphemy to say that He ever became incarnate in the person of a man; and, if the Trinitarian says, that the Deity is numerically three as well as numerically one, and that it is sheer blasphemy to say that He did not so become incarnate, it is obvious enough that each must be logically held to deny the existence of the other's Deity. Therefore; that each has a scientific right to call the other an atheist; and that, if he refrains, it is only on the ground of decency and good manners, which should restrain an honourable man from employing even scientifically justifiable language, if custom has given it an abusive connotation. While one must agree with Hume, then, it is, nevertheless, to be wished that he had not set the bad example of calling polytheists "superstitious atheists." It probably did not occur to him that, by a parity of reasoning, the Unitarians might justify the application of the same language to the Ultramontanes, and *vice versâ*. But, to return from a digression which may not be wholly unprofitable, Hume proceeds to show in what manner polytheism incorporated physical and moral allegories, and naturally accepted hero worship; and he sums up his views of the first stages of the evolution of theology as follows:—

"These then are the general principles of polytheism, founded in human nature, and little or nothing dependent on caprice or accident. As the *causes* which bestow happiness or misery, are in general very little known and very uncertain,

our anxious concern endeavours to attain a determinate idea of them: and finds no better expedient than to represent them as intelligent, voluntary agents, like ourselves, only somewhat superior in power and wisdom. The limited influence of these agents, and their proximity to human weakness, introduce the various distribution and division of their authority, and thereby give rise to allegory. The same principles naturally deify mortals, superior in power, courage, or understanding, and produce hero-worship; together with fabulous history and mythological tradition, in all its wild and unaccountable forms. And as an invisible spiritual intelligence is an object too refined for vulgar apprehension, men naturally affix it to some sensible representation; such as either the more conspicuous parts of nature, or the statues, images, and pictures, which a more refined age forms of its divinities." —(IV. p. 461.)

How did the further stage of theology, monotheism, arise out of polytheism? Hume replies, certainly not by reasonings from first causes or any sort of fine-drawn logic:—

"Even at this day, and in Europe, ask any of the vulgar why he believes in an Omnipotent Creator of the world, he will never mention the beauty of final causes, of which he is wholly ignorant: He will not hold out his hand and bid you contemplate the suppleness and variety of joints in his fingers, their bending all one way, the counterpoise which they receive from the thumb, the softness and fleshy parts of the inside of the hand, with all the other circumstances which render that member fit for the use to which it was destined. To these he has been long accustomed; and he beholds them with listlessness and unconcern. He will tell you of the sudden and unexpected death of such-a-one; the fall and bruise of such another; the excessive drought of this season; the cold and rains of another. These he ascribes to the immediate operation of Providence: And such events as, with good reasoners, are the chief difficulties in admitting a Supreme Intelligence, are with him the sole arguments for it. . . .

"We may conclude therefore, upon the whole, that since the vulgar, in nations which have embraced the doctrine of theism, still build it upon irrational and superstitious grounds, they are never led into that opinion by any process of argument, but by a certain train of thinking, more suitable to their genius and capacity.

"It may readily happen, in an idolatrous nation, that though men admit the existence of several limited deities, yet there is some one God, whom, in a particular manner, they make the object of their worship and adoration. They may either suppose, that, in the distribution of power and territory among the Gods, their nation was subjected to the jurisdiction of that particular deity; or, reducing heavenly objects to the model of things below, they may represent one god as the prince or supreme magistrate of the rest, who, though of the same nature, rules them with an authority like that which an earthly sovereign exerts over his subjects and vassals. Whether this god, therefore, be considered as their peculiar patron, or as the general sovereign of heaven, his votaries will endeavour, by every art, to insinuate themselves into his favour; and supposing him to be pleased, like themselves, with praise and flattery, there is no eulogy or exaggeration which will be spared in their addresses to him. In proportion as men's fears or distresses become more urgent, they still invent new strains of adulation; and even he who outdoes his predecessor in swelling the titles of his divinity, is sure to be outdone by his successor in newer and more pompous epithets of praise. Thus they proceed, till at last they arrive at infinity itself, beyond which there is no further progress; And it is well if, in striving to get further, and to represent a magnificent simplicity, they run not into inexplicable mystery, and destroy the intelligent nature of their deity, on which alone any rational worship or adoration can be founded. While they confine themselves to the notion of a perfect being, the Creator of the world, they coincide, by chance, with the principles of reason and true philosophy; though they are guided to that notion, not by reason, of which they are in a great measure incapable, but by the

adulation and fears of the most vulgar superstition." (IV. pp. 463-6.)

"Nay, if we should suppose, what never happens, that a popular religion were found, in which it was expressly declared, that nothing but morality could gain the divine favour; if an order of priests were instituted to inculcate this opinion, in daily sermons, and with all the arts of persuasion; yet so inveterate are the people's prejudices, that, for want of some other superstition, they would make the very attendance on these sermons the essentials of religion, rather than place them in virtue and good morals. The sublime prologue of Zaleucus' laws inspired not the Locrians, so far as we can learn, with any sounder notions of the measures of acceptance with the deity, than were familiar to the other Greeks."—(IV. p. 505.)

It has been remarked that Hume's writings are singularly devoid of local colour; of allusions to the scenes with which he was familiar, and to the people from whom he sprang. Yet, surely, the Lowlands of Scotland were more in his thoughts than the Zephyrean promontory, and the hard visage of John Knox peered from behind the mask of Zaleucus, when this passage left his pen. Nay, might not an acute German critic discern therein a reminiscence of that eminently Scottish institution, a "Holy Fair"? where as Hume's young contemporary sings:—

"* * * opens out his cauld harangues
On practice and on morals;
An' aff the godly pour in thrangs
To gie the jars and barrels
A lift that day.

"What signifies his barren shine
Of moral powers and reason?

His English style and gesture fine
Are a' clean out of season.
Like Socrates or Antonine,
Or some auld pagan heathen,
The moral man he does define,
But ne'er a word o' faith in
That's right that day."[1]

[1] Burns published the *Holy Fair* only ten years after Hume's death.

CHAPTER IX.

THE SOUL: THE DOCTRINE OF IMMORTALITY.

Descartes taught that an absolute difference of kind separates matter, as that which possesses extension, from spirit, as that which thinks. They not only have no character in common, but it is inconceivable that they should have any. On the assumption, that the attributes of the two were wholly different, it appeared to be a necessary consequence that the hypothetical causes of these attributes—their respective substances—must be totally different. Notably, in the matter of divisibility, since that which has no extension cannot be divisible, it seemed that the *chose pensante*, the soul, must be an indivisible entity.

Later philosophers, accepting this notion of the soul, were naturally much perplexed to understand how, if matter and spirit had nothing in common, they could act and react on one another. All the changes of matter being modes of motion, the difficulty of understanding how a moving extended material body was to affect a thinking thing which had no dimension, was as great as that involved in solving the problem of how to hit a nominative case with a stick. Hence, the successors of Descartes either found themselves obliged, with the

Occasionalists, to call in the aid of the Deity, who was supposed to be a sort of go-between betwixt matter and spirit; or they had recourse, with Leibnitz, to the doctrine of pre-established harmony, which denied any influence of the body on the soul, or *vice versâ*, and compared matter and spirit to two clocks so accurately regulated to keep time with one another, that the one struck whenever the other pointed to the hour; or, with Berkeley, they abolished the "substance" of matter altogether, as a superfluity, though they failed to see that the same arguments equally justified the abolition of soul as another superfluity, and the reduction of the universe to a series of events or phenomena; or, finally, with Spinoza, to whom Berkeley makes a perilously close approach, they asserted the existence of only one substance, with two chief attributes, the one, thought, and the other, extension.

There remained only one possible position, which, had it been taken up earlier, might have saved an immensity of trouble; and that was to affirm that we do not, and cannot, know anything about the "substance" either of the thinking thing, or of the extended thing. And Hume's sound common sense led him to defend this thesis, which Locke had already foreshadowed, with respect to the question of the substance of the soul. Hume enunciates two opinions. The first is that the question itself is unintelligible, and therefore cannot receive any answer; the second is that the popular doctrine respecting the immateriality, simplicity, and indivisibility of a thinking substance is a "true atheism, and will serve to justify all those sentiments for which Spinoza is so universally infamous."

In support of the first opinion, Hume points out that

it is impossible to attach any definite meaning to the word "substance" when employed for the hypothetical substratum of soul and matter. For if we define substance as that which may exist by itself, the definition does not distinguish the soul from perceptions. It is perfectly easy to conceive that states of consciousness are self-subsistent. And, if the substance of the soul is defined as that in which perceptions inhere, what is meant by the inherence? Is such inherence conceivable? If conceivable, what evidence is there of it? And what is the use of a substratum to things which, for anything we know to the contrary, are capable of existing by themselves?

Moreover, it may be added, supposing the soul has a substance, how do we know that it is different from the substance, which, on like grounds, must be supposed to underlie the qualities of matter?

Again, if it be said that our personal identity requires the assumption of a substance which remains the same while the accidents of perception shift and change, the question arises what is meant by personal identity?

"For my part," says Hume, "when I enter most intimately into what I call *myself*, I always stumble on some particular perception or other, of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure. I never can catch *myself* at any time without a perception, and never can observe anything but the perception. When my perceptions are removed for any time, as by sound sleep, so long am I insensible of *myself*, and may be truly said not to exist. And were all my perceptions removed by death, and I could neither think, nor feel, nor see, nor love, nor hate, after the dissolution of my body, I should be entirely annihilated, nor do I conceive what is further requisite to make me a perfect nonentity. If any one, upon serious and unprejudiced reflection, thinks he has

a different notion of *himself*, I must confess I can reason no longer with him. All I can allow him is, that he may be in the right as well as I, and that we are essentially different in this particular. He may perhaps perceive something simple and continued which he calls *himself*, though I am certain there is no such principle in me.

"But setting aside some metaphysicians of this kind, I may venture to affirm of the rest of mankind, that they are nothing but a bundle or collection of different perceptions, which succeed one another with an inconceivable rapidity, and are in a perpetual flux and movement. . . . The mind is a kind of theatre, where several perceptions successively make their appearance, pass, repass, glide away, and mingle in an infinite variety of postures and situations. There is properly no *simplicity* in it at one time, nor *identity* in different, whatever natural propension we may have to imagine that simplicity and identity. The comparison of the theatre must not mislead us. They are the successive perceptions only that constitute the mind; nor have we the most distant notion of the place where these scenes are represented, or of the materials of which it is composed.

"What then gives so great a propension to ascribe an identity to these successive perceptions, and to suppose ourselves possessed of an invariable and uninterrupted existence through the whole course of our lives? In order to answer this question, we must distinguish between personal identity as it regards our thought and imagination, and as it regards our passions, or the concern we take in ourselves. The first is our present subject; and to explain it perfectly we must take the matter pretty deep, and account for that identity which we attribute to plants and animals; there being a great analogy betwixt it and the identity of a self or person."—(I. pp. 321, 322.)

Perfect identity is exhibited by an object which remains unchanged throughout a certain time; perfect diversity is seen in two or more objects which are separated by intervals of space and periods of time.

But, in both these cases, there is no sharp line of demarcation between identity and diversity, and it is impossible to say when an object ceases to be one and becomes two.

When a sea-anemone multiplies by division, there is a time during which it is said to be one animal partially divided; but, after a while, it becomes two animals adherent together, and the limit between these conditions is purely arbitrary. So in mineralogy, a crystal of a definite chemical composition may have its substance replaced, particle by particle, by another chemical compound. When does it lose its primitive identity and become a new thing?

Again, a plant or an animal, in the course of its existence, from the condition of an egg or seed to the end of life, remains the same neither in form, nor in structure, nor in the matter of which it is composed: every attribute it possesses is constantly changing, and yet we say that it is always one and the same individual. And if, in this case, we attribute identity without supposing an indivisible immaterial something to underlie and condition that identity, why should we need the supposition in the case of that succession of changeful phenomena we call the mind?

In fact, we ascribe identity to an individual plant or animal, simply because there has been no moment of time at which we could observe any division of it into parts separated by time or space. Every experience we have of it is as one thing and not as two; and we sum up our experiences in the ascription of identity, although we know quite well that, strictly speaking, it has not been the same for any two moments.

So with the mind. Our perceptions flow in even

succession ; the impressions of the present moment are inextricably mixed up with the memories of yesterday and the expectations of to-morrow, and all are connected by the links of cause and effect.

". . . as the same individual republic may not only change its members, but also its laws and constitutions ; in like manner the same person may vary his character and disposition, as well as his impressions and ideas, without losing his identity. Whatever changes he endures, his several parts are still connected by the relation of causation. And in this view our identity with regard to the passions serves to corroborate that with regard to the imagination, by the making our distant perceptions influence each other, and by giving us a present concern for our past or future pains or pleasures.

"As memory alone acquaints us with the continuance and extent of this succession of perceptions, tis to be considered, upon that account chiefly, as the source of personal identity. Had we no memory we never should have any notion of causation, nor consequently of that chain of causes and effects which constitute our self or person. But having once acquired this notion of causation from the memory, we can extend the same chain of causes, and consequently the identity of our persons, beyond our memory, and can comprehend times, and circumstances, and actions, which we have entirely forgot, but suppose in general to have existed. For how few of our past actions are there of which we have any memory? Who can tell me, for instance, what were his thoughts and actions on the first of January, 1715, the eleventh of March, 1719, and the third of August, 1733? Or will he affirm, because he has entirely forgot the incidents of those days, that the present self is not the same person with the self of that time, and by that means overturn all the most established notions of personal identity? In this view, therefore, memory does not so much *produce* as *discover* personal identity, by showing us the relation of cause and effect among our different perceptions. 'Twill be incumbent on those who affirm that memory produces entirely our personal identity,

to give a reason why we can thus extend our identity beyond our memory.

"The whole of this doctrine leads us to a conclusion which is of great importance in the present affair, viz. that all the nice and subtle questions concerning personal identity can never possibly be decided, and are to be regarded rather as grammatical than as philosophical difficulties. Identity depends on the relations of ideas, and these relations produce identity by means of that easy transition they occasion. But as the relations, and the easiness of the transition may diminish by insensible degrees, we have no just standard by which we can decide any dispute concerning the time when they acquire or lose a title to the name of identity. All the disputes concerning the identity of connected objects are merely verbal, except so far as the relation of parts gives rise to some fiction or imaginary principle of union, as we have already observed.

"What I have said concerning the first origin and uncertainty of our notion of identity, as applied to the human mind may be extended, with little or no variation, to that of *simplicity*. An object, whose different co-existent parts are bound together by a close relation, operates upon the imagination after much the same manner as one perfectly simple and undivisible, and requires not a much greater stretch of thought in order to its conception. From this similarity of operation we attribute a simplicity to it, and feign a principle of union as the support of this simplicity, and the centre of all the different parts and qualities of the object."—(I. pp. 331—3.)

The final result of Hume's reasoning comes to this: As we use the name of body for the sum of the phenomena which make up our corporeal existence, so we employ the name of soul for the sum of the phenomena which constitute our mental existence; and we have no more reason, in the latter case, than in the former, to suppose that there is anything beyond the phenomena which answers to the name. In the case of the soul, as in that

of the body, the idea of substance is a mere fiction of the imagination. This conclusion is nothing but a rigorous application of Berkeley's reasoning concerning matter to mind, and it is fully adopted by Kant.[1]

Having arrived at the conclusion that the conception of a soul, as a substantive thing, is a mere figment of the imagination; and that, whether it exists or not, we can by no possibility know anything about it, the inquiry as to the durability of the soul may seem superfluous.

Nevertheless, there is still a sense in which, even under these conditions, such an inquiry is justifiable. Leaving aside the problem of the substance of the soul, and taking the word "soul" simply as a name for the series of mental phenomena which make up an individual mind; it remains open to us to ask, whether that series commenced with, or before, the series of phenomena which constitute the corresponding individual body; and whether it terminates with the end of the corporeal series, or goes on after the existence of the body has ended. And, in both cases, there arises the further question, whether the excess of duration of the mental series over that of the body, is finite or infinite.

Hume has discussed some of these questions in the remarkable essay *On the Immortality of the Soul*, which was not published till after his death, and which seems long to have remained but little known. Nevertheless, indeed, possibly, for that reason, its influence has been

[1] "Our internal intuition shows no permanent existence, for the Ego is only the consciousness of my thinking." "There is no means whatever by which we can learn anything respecting the constitution of the soul, so far as regards the possibility of its separate existence."—*Kritik von den Paralogismen der reinen Vernunft.*

manifested in unexpected quarters, and its main arguments have been adduced by archiepiscopal and episcopal authority in evidence of the value of revelation. Dr. Whately,[1] sometime Archbishop of Dublin, paraphrases Hume, though he forgets to cite him; and Bishop Courtenay's elaborate work,[2] dedicated to the Archbishop, is a development of that prelate's version of Hume's essay.

This little paper occupies only some ten pages, but it is not wonderful that it attracted an acute logician like Whately, for it is a model of clear and vigorous statement. The argument hardly admits of condensation, so that I must let Hume speak for himself:—

"By the mere light of reason it seems difficult to prove the immortality of the soul: the arguments for it are commonly derived either from metaphysical topics, or moral, or physical. But in reality it is the gospel, and the gospel alone, that has brought *life and immortality* to light.[3]

"1. Metaphysical topics suppose that the soul is immaterial, and that 'tis impossible for thought to belong to a material

[1] *Essays on Some of the Peculiarities of the Christian Religion*, (Essay I. Revelation of a Future State), by Richard Whately, D.D., Archbishop of Dublin. Fifth Edition, revised, 1846.

[2] *The Future States: their Evidences and Nature; considered on Principles Physical, Moral, and Scriptural, with the Design of showing the Value of the Gospel Revelation* by the Right Rev. Reginald Courtenay, D.D., Lord Bishop of Kingston (Jamaica), 1857.

[3] "Now that 'Jesus Christ brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel,' and that in the most literal sense, which implies that the revelation of the doctrine is *peculiar* to His Gospel, seems to be at least the most obvious meaning of the Scriptures of the New Testament."—Whately, *l.c.* p. 27.

substance.[1] But just metaphysics teach us that the notion of substance is wholly confused and imperfect; and that we have no other idea of any substance, than as an aggregate of particular qualities inhering in an unknown something. Matter, therefore, and spirit, are at bottom equally unknown, and we cannot determine what qualities inhere in the one or in the other.[2] They likewise teach us, that nothing can be decided *a priori* concerning any cause or effect; and that experience, being the only source of our judgments of this nature, we cannot know from any other principle, whether matter, by its structure or arrangement, may not be the cause of thought. Abstract reasonings cannot decide any question of fact or existence. But admitting a spiritual substance to be dispersed throughout the universe, like the ethereal fire of the Stoics, and to be the only inherent subject of thought, we have reason to conclude from *analogy*, that nature uses it after the manner she does the other substance, *matter*. She employs it as a kind of paste or clay; modifies it into a variety of forms or existences; dissolves after a time each modification, and from its substance erects a new form. As the same material substance may successively compose the bodies of all animals, the same spiritual substance may compose their minds: Their consciousness, or that system of thought which they formed during life, may be continually dissolved by death, and nothing interests them in the new modification. The most positive assertors of the mortality of the soul never denied the immortality of its substance; and that an immaterial

[1] Compare, *Of the Immateriality of the Soul*, Section V. of Part IV., Book I., of the *Treatise*, in which Hume concludes (I. p. 319) that, whether it be material or immaterial, "in both cases the metaphysical arguments for the immortality of the soul are equally inconclusive; and in both cases the moral arguments and those derived from the analogy of nature are equally strong and convincing."

[2] "The question again respecting the materiality of the soul is one which I am at a loss to understand clearly, till it shall have been clearly determined *what matter is*. We know nothing of it, any more than of mind, except its attributes."—Whately, *l.c.* p. 66.

substance, as well as a material, may lose its memory or consciousness, appears in part from experience, if the soul be immaterial. Reasoning from the common course of nature, and without supposing any new interposition of the Supreme Cause, which ought always to be excluded from philosophy, *what is incorruptible must also be ingenerable.* The soul, therefore, if immortal, existed before our birth, and if the former existence noways concerned us, neither will the latter. Animals undoubtedly feel, think, love, hate, will, and even reason, though in a more imperfect manner than men: Are their souls also immaterial and immortal?" [1]

Hume next proceeds to consider the moral arguments, and chiefly

". . . those derived from the justice of God, which is supposed to be further interested in the future punishment of the vicious and reward of the virtuous."

But if by the justice of God we mean the same attribute which we call justice in ourselves, then why should either reward or punishment be extended beyond this life? [2] Our sole means of knowing anything is the

[1] "None of those who contend for the natural immortality of the soul . . . have been able to extricate themselves from one difficulty, viz. that all their arguments apply, with exactly the same force, to prove an immortality, not only of *brutes*, but even of *plants*; though in such a conclusion as this they are never willing to acquiesce."—Whately, *l.c.* p. 67.

[2] "Nor are we therefore authorised to infer *à priori*, independent of Revelation, a future state of retribution, from the irregularities prevailing in the present life, since that future state does not account fully for these irregularities. It may explain, indeed, how present evil may be conducive to future good, but not why the good could not be attained without the evil; it may reconcile with our notions of the divine justice the present prosperity of the wicked, but it does not account for the existence of the wicked." —Whately, *l.c.* pp. 69, 70.

reasoning faculty which God has given us; and that reasoning faculty not only denies us any conception of a future state, but fails to furnish a single valid argument in favour of the belief that the mind will endure after the dissolution of the body.

". . . If any purpose of nature be clear, we may affirm that the whole scope and intention of man's creation, so far as we can judge by natural reason, is limited to the present life."

To the argument that the powers of man are so much greater than the needs of this life require, that they suggest a future scene in which they can be employed, Hume replies:—

"If the reason of man gives him great superiority above other animals, his necessities are proportionably multiplied upon him; his whole time, his whole capacity, activity, courage, and passion, find sufficient employment in fencing against the miseries of his present condition; and frequently, nay, almost always, are too slender for the business assigned them. A pair of shoes, perhaps, was never yet wrought to the highest degree of perfection that commodity is capable of attaining; yet it is necessary, at least very useful, that there should be some politicians and moralists, even some geometers, poets and philosophers, among mankind. The powers of men are no more superior to their wants, considered merely in this life, than those of foxes and hares are, compared to *their* wants and to their period of existence. The inference from parity of reason is therefore obvious."

In short, Hume argues that, if the faculties with which we are endowed are unable to discover a future state, and if the most attentive consideration of their nature serves to show that they are adapted to this life and nothing more, it is surely inconsistent with any

conception of justice that we should be dealt with, as if we had all along had a clear knowledge of the fact thus carefully concealed from us. What should we think of the justice of a father, who gave his son every reason to suppose that a trivial fault would only be visited by a box on the ear; and then, years afterwards, put him on the rack for a week for the same fault?

Again, the suggestion arises, if God is the cause of all things, he is responsible for evil as well as for good; and it appears utterly irreconcilable with our notions of justice that he should punish another for that which he has, in fact, done himself. Moreover, just punishment bears a proportion to the offence, while suffering which is infinite is *ipso facto* disproportionate to any finite deed.

"Why then eternal punishment for the temporary offences of so frail a creature as man? Can any one approve of Alexander's rage, who intended to exterminate a whole nation because they had seized his favourite horse Bucephalus?

"Heaven and hell suppose two distinct species of men, the good and the bad; but the greatest part of mankind float betwixt vice and virtue. Were one to go round the world with the intention of giving a good supper to the righteous and a sound drubbing to the wicked, he would frequently be embarrassed in his choice, and would find the merits and demerits of most men and women scarcely amount to the value of either."[1]

[1] "So reason also shows, that for man to expect to earn for himself by the practice of virtue, and claim, as his just right, an immortality of exalted happiness, is a most extravagant and groundless pretension."—Whately, *l.c.* p. 101. On the other hand, however, the Archbishop sees no unreasonableness in a man's earning for himself an immortality of intense unhappiness by the practice of vice. So that life is, naturally, a venture in which you may lose all, but

One can but admire the broad humanity and the insight into the springs of action manifest in this passage. *Comprendre est à moitié pardonner.* The more one knows of the real conditions which determine men's acts the less one finds either to praise or blame. For kindly David Hume, "the damnation of one man is an infinitely greater evil in the universe than the subversion of a thousand million of kingdoms." And he would have felt with his countryman Burns, that even "auld Nickie Ben" should "hae a chance."

As against those who reason for the necessity of a future state, in order that the justice of the Deity may be satisfied, Hume's argumentation appears unanswerable. For if the justice of God resembles what we mean by justice, the bestowal of infinite happiness for finite well-doing and infinite misery for finite ill-doing, it is in no sense just. And, if the justice of God does not resemble what we mean by justice, it is an abuse of language to employ the name of justice for the attribute described by it. But, as against those who choose to argue that there is nothing in what is known to us of the attributes of the Deity inconsistent with a future state of rewards and punishments, Hume's pleadings have no force. Bishop Butler's argument that, inasmuch as the visitation of our acts by rewards and punishments takes place in this life, rewards and punishments must be consistent with the attributes of the Deity, and therefore may go on as long as the mind endures, is unanswerable. Whatever exists is, by the hypothesis, existent by the will of God; and, therefore, the pains and pleasures which

can earn nothing. It may be thought somewhat hard upon mankind if they are pushed into a speculation of this sort, willy-nilly.

exist now may go on existing for all eternity, either increasing, diminishing, or being endlessly varied in their intensity, as they are now.

It is remarkable that Hume does not refer to the sentimental arguments for the immortality of the soul which are so much in vogue at the present day; and which are based upon our desire for a longer conscious existence than that which nature appears to have allotted to us. Perhaps he did not think them worth notice. For indeed it is not a little strange, that our strong desire that a certain occurrence should happen should be put forward as evidence that it will happen. If my intense desire to see the friend, from whom I have parted, does not bring him from the other side of the world, or take me thither; if the mother's agonised prayer that her child should live has not prevented him from dying; experience certainly affords no presumption that the strong desire to be alive after death, which we call the aspiration after immortality, is any more likely to be gratified. As Hume truly says, "All doctrines are to be suspected which are favoured by our passions;" and the doctrine, that we are immortal because we should extremely like to be so, contains the quintessence of suspiciousness.

In respect of the existence and attributes of the soul, as of those of the Deity, then, logic is powerless and reason silent. At the most we can get no further than the conclusion of Kant:—

"After we have satisfied ourselves of the vanity of all the ambitious attempts of reason to fly beyond the bounds of experience, enough remains of practical value to content us. It is true that no one may boast that he *knows* that God and a future life exist; for, if he possesses such know-

ledge, he is just the man for whom I have long been seeking. All knowledge (touching an object of mere reason) can be communicated, and therefore I might hope to see my own knowledge increased to this prodigious extent, by his instruction. No; our conviction in these matters is not *logical*, but *moral* certainty; and, inasmuch as it rests upon subjective grounds, (of moral disposition) I must not even say: *it is* morally certain that there is a God, and so on; but, *I am* morally certain, and so on. That is to say: the belief in a God and in another world is so interwoven with my moral nature, that the former can no more vanish, than the latter can ever be torn from me.

"The only point to be remarked here is that this act of faith of the intellect (*Vernunftglaube*) assumes the existence of moral dispositions. If we leave them aside, and suppose a mind quite indifferent to moral laws, the inquiry started by reason becomes merely a subject for speculation; and [the conclusion attained] may then indeed be supported by strong arguments from analogy, but not by such as are competent to overcome persistent scepticism.

"There is no one, however, who can fail to be interested in these questions. For, although he may be excluded from moral influences by the want of a good disposition, yet, even in this case, enough remains to lead him to fear a divine existence and a future state. To this end, no more is necessary than that he can at least have no certainty that there is no such being, and no future life; for, to make this conclusion demonstratively certain, he must be able to prove the impossibility of both; and this assuredly no rational man can undertake to do. This negative belief, indeed, cannot produce either morality or good dispositions, but can operate in an analogous fashion, by powerfully repressing the outbreak of evil tendencies.

"But it will be said, is this all that Pure Reason can do when it gazes out beyond the bounds of experience? Nothing more than two articles of faith? Common sense could achieve as much without calling the philosophers to its counsels!

"I will not here speak of the service which philosophy has rendered to human reason by the laborious efforts of its criticism, granting that the outcome proves to be merely negative: about that matter something is to be said in the following section. But do you then ask, that the knowledge which interests all men shall transcend the common understanding and be discovered for you only by philosophers? The very thing which you make a reproach, is the best confirmation of the justice of the previous conclusions, since it shows that which could not, at first, have been anticipated; namely, that in those matters which concern all men alike, nature is not guilty of distributing her gifts with partiality; and that the highest philosophy, in dealing with the most important concerns of humanity, is able to take us no further than the guidance which she affords to the commonest understanding." [1]

In short, nothing can be proved or disproved, respecting either the distinct existence, the substance, or the durability of the soul. So far, Kant is at one with Hume. But Kant adds, as you cannot disprove the immortality of the soul, and as the belief therein is very useful for moral purposes, you may assume it. To which, had Hume lived half a century later, he would probably have replied, that, if morality has no better foundation than an assumption, it is not likely to bear much strain; and, if it has a better foundation, the assumption rather weakens than strengthens it.

As has been already said, Hume is not content with denying that we know anything about the existence or the nature of the soul; but he carries the war into the enemy's camp, and accuses those who affirm the immateriality, simplicity, and indivisibility of the thinking substance, of atheism and Spinozism, which are assumed to be convertible terms.

[1] *Kritik der reinen Vernunft.* Ed. Hartenstein, p. 547.

The method of attack is ingenious. Observation appears to acquaint us with two different systems of beings, and both Spinoza and orthodox philosophers agree, that the necessary substratum of each of these is a substance, in which the phenomena adhere, or of which they are attributes or modes.

"I observe first the universe of objects or of body; the sun, moon, and stars; the earth, seas, plants, animals, men, ships, houses, and other productions either of art or of nature. Here Spinoza appears, and tells me that these are only modifications and that the subject in which they inhere is simple, uncompounded, and indivisible. After this I consider the other system of beings, viz. the universe of thought, or my impressions and ideas. Then I observe another sun, moon, and stars; an earth and seas, covered and inhabited by plants and animals, towns, houses, mountains, rivers; and, in short, everything I can discover or conceive in the first system. Upon my inquiring concerning these, theologians present themselves, and tell me that these also are modifications, and modifications of one simple, uncompounded, and indivisible substance. Immediately upon which I am deafened with the noise of a hundred voices, that treat the first hypothesis with detestation and scorn, and the second with applause and veneration. I turn my attention to these hypotheses to see what may be the reason of so great a partiality; and find that they have the same fault of being unintelligible, and that, as far as we can understand them, they are so much alike, that 'tis impossible to discover any absurdity in one, which is not common to both of them."—(I. p. 309.)

For the manner in which Hume makes his case good, I must refer to the original. Plain people may rest satisfied that both hypotheses are unintelligible, without plunging any further among syllogisms, the premisses of which convey no meaning, while the conclusions carry no conviction.

CHAPTER X.

VOLITION: LIBERTY AND NECESSITY.

In the opening paragraphs of the third part of the second book of the *Treatise*, Hume gives a description of the will.

"Of all the immediate effects of pain and pleasure there is none more remarkable than the *will;* and though, properly speaking, it be not comprehended among the passions, yet as the full understanding of its nature and properties is necessary to the explanation of them, we shall here make it the subject of our inquiry. I desire it may be observed, that, by the *will*, I mean nothing but *the internal impression we feel, and are conscious of, when we knowingly give rise to any new motion of our body, or new perception of our mind.* This impression, like the preceding ones of pride and humility, love and hatred, 'tis impossible to define, and needless to describe any further."—(II. p. 150.)

This description of volition may be criticised on various grounds. More especially does it seem defective in restricting the term "will" to that feeling which arises when we act, or appear to act, as causes: for one may will to strike, without striking; or to think of something which we have forgotten.

Every volition is a complex idea composed of two elements: the one is the idea of an action; the other is

a desire for the occurrence of that action. If I will to strike, I have an idea of a certain movement, and a desire that that movement should take place; if I will to think of any subject, or, in other words, to attend to that subject, I have an idea of the subject and a strong desire that it should remain present to my consciousness. And so far as I can discover, this combination of an idea of an object with an emotion, is everything that can be directly observed in an act of volition. So that Hume's definition may be amended thus: Volition is the impression which arises when the idea of a bodily or mental action is accompanied by the desire that the action should be accomplished. It differs from other desires simply in the fact, that we regard ourselves as possible causes of the action desired.

Two questions arise, in connexion with the observation of the phenomenon of volition, as they arise out of the contemplation of all other natural phenomena. Firstly, has it a cause; and, if so, what is its cause? Secondly, is it followed by any effect, and if so, what effect does it produce?

Hume points out, that the nature of the phenomena we consider can have nothing to do with the origin of the conception that they are connected by the relation of cause and effect. For that relation is nothing but an order of succession, which, so far as our experience goes, is invariable; and it is obvious that the nature of phenomena has nothing to do with their order. Whatever it is that leads us to seek for a cause for every event, in the case of the phenomena of the external world, compels us, with equal cogency, to seek it in that of the mind.

The only meaning of the law of causation, in the physical world, is, that it generalises universal experience

of the order of that world; and, if experience shows a similar order to obtain among states of consciousness, the law of causation will properly express that order.

That such an order exists, however, is acknowledged by every sane man:

"Our idea, therefore, of necessity and causation, arises entirely from the uniformity observable in the operations of nature, where similar objects are constantly conjoined together, and the mind is determined by custom to infer the one from the appearance of the other. These two circumstances form the whole of that necessity which we ascribe to matter. Beyond the constant *conjunction* of similar objects and the consequent *inference* from one to the other, we have no notion of any necessity of connexion.

"If it appear, therefore, what all mankind have ever allowed, without any doubt or hesitation, that these two circumstances take place in the voluntary actions of men, and in the operations of mind, it must follow that all mankind have ever agreed in the doctrine of necessity, and that they have hitherto disputed merely from not understanding each other." —(IV. p. 97.)

But is this constant conjunction observable in human actions? A student of history could give but one answer to this question:

"Ambition, avarice, self-love, vanity, friendship, generosity, public spirit: these passions, mixed in various degrees, and distributed through society, have been, from the beginning of the world, and still are, the source of all the actions and enterprizes which have ever been observed among mankind. Would you know the sentiments, inclinations, and course of life of the Greeks and Romans? Study well the temper and actions of the French and English. You cannot be much mistaken in transferring to the former *most* of the observations which you have made with regard to the latter. Mankind are so much the same, in all times and places, that history

informs us of nothing new or strange in this particular. Its chief use is only to discover the constant and universal principles of human nature, by showing men in all varieties of circumstances and situations, and furnishing us with materials from which we may form our observations, and become acquainted with the regular springs of human action and behaviour. These records of wars, intrigues, factions, and revolutions are so many collections of experiments, by which the politician or moral philosopher fixes the principles of his science, in the same manner as the physician or natural philosopher becomes acquainted with the nature of plants, minerals, and other external objects, by the experiments which he forms concerning them. Nor are the earth, air, water, and other elements examined by Aristotle and Hippocrates more like to those which at present lie under our observation, than the men described by Polybius and Tacitus are to those who now govern the world."—(IV. pp. 97-8.)

Hume proceeds to point out that the value set upon experience in the conduct of affairs, whether of business or of politics, involves the acknowledgment that we base our expectation of what men will do, upon our observation of what they have done; and, that we are as firmly convinced of the fixed order of thoughts as we are of that of things. And, if it be urged that human actions not unfrequently appear unaccountable and capricious, his reply is prompt:—

"I grant it possible to find some actions which seem to have no regular connexion with any known motives, and are exceptions to all the measures of conduct which have ever been established for the government of men. But if one could willingly know what judgment should be formed of such irregular and extraordinary actions, we may consider the sentiments commonly entertained with regard to those irregular events which appear in the course of nature, and

the operations of external objects. All causes are not conjoined to their usual effects with like uniformity. An artificer, who handles only dead matter, may be disappointed in his aim, as well as the politician who directs the conduct of sensible and intelligent agents.

"The vulgar, who take things according to their first appearance, attribute the uncertainty of events to such an uncertainty in the causes as make the latter often fail of their usual influence, though they meet with no impediment to their operation. But philosophers, observing that, almost in every part of nature, there is contained a vast variety of springs and principles, which are hid, by reason of their minuteness or remoteness, find that it is at least possible the contrariety of events may not proceed from any contingency in the cause, but from the secret operation of contrary causes. This possibility is converted into certainty by further observation, when they remark that, upon an exact scrutiny, a contrariety of effects always betrays a contrariety of causes, and proceeds from their mutual opposition. A peasant can give no better reason for the stopping of any clock or watch, than to say that it does not commonly go right. But an artist easily perceives that the same force in the spring or pendulum has always the same influence on the wheels; but fails of its usual effect, perhaps by reason of a grain of dust, which puts a stop to the whole movement. From the observation of several parallel instances, philosophers form a maxim, that the connexion between all causes and effects is equally necessary, and that its seeming uncertainty in some instances proceeds from the secret opposition of contrary causes."—(IV. pp. 101-2.)

So with regard to human actions:—

"The internal principles and motives may operate in a uniform manner, notwithstanding these seeming irregularities; in the same manner as the winds, rains, clouds, and other variations of the weather are supposed to be governed by steady principles; though not easily discoverable by human sagacity and inquiry."—(IV. p. 103.)

Meteorology, as a science, was not in existence in Hume's time, or he would have left out the "supposed to be." In practice, again, what difference does any one make between natural and moral evidence?

"A prisoner who has neither money nor interest, discovers the impossibility of his escape, as well when he considers the obstinacy of the gaoler, as the walls and bars with which he is surrounded; and, in all attempts for his freedom, chooses rather to work upon the stone and iron of the one, than upon the inflexible nature of the other. The same prisoner, when conducted to the scaffold, foresees his death as certainly from the constancy and fidelity of his guards, as from the operation of the axe or wheel. His mind runs along a certain train of ideas: The refusal of the soldiers to consent to his escape; the action of the executioner; the separation of the head and body; bleeding, convulsive motions, and death. Here is a connected chain of natural causes and voluntary actions; but the mind feels no difference between them, in passing from one link to another, nor is less certain of the future event, than if it were connected with the objects presented to the memory or senses, by a train of causes cemented together by what we are pleased to call a *physical* necessity. The same experienced union has the same effect on the mind, whether the united objects be motives, volition, and actions; or figure and motion. We may change the names of things, but their nature and their operation on the understanding never change."—(IV. pp. 105-6.)

But, if the necessary connexion of our acts with our ideas has always been acknowledged in practice, why the proclivity of mankind to deny it words?

"If we examine the operations of body, and the production of effects from their causes, we shall find that all our faculties can never carry us further in our knowledge of this relation, than barely to observe, that particular objects are *constantly*

conjoined together, and that the mind is carried, by a *customary transition*, from the appearance of the one to the belief of the other. But though this conclusion concerning human ignorance be the result of the strictest scrutiny of this subject, men still entertain a strong propensity to believe, that they penetrate further into the province of nature, and perceive something like a necessary connexion between cause and effect. When, again, they turn their reflections towards the operations of their own minds, and *feel* no such connexion between the motive and the action; they are thence apt to suppose, that there is a difference between the effects which result from material force, and those which arise from thought and intelligence. But, being once convinced, that we know nothing of causation of any kind, than merely the *constant conjunction* of objects, and the consequent *inference* of the mind from one to another, and finding that these two circumstances are universally allowed to have place in voluntary actions; we may be more easily led to own the same necessity common to all causes."—(IV. pp. 107, 8.)

The last asylum of the hard-pressed advocate of the doctrine of uncaused volition is usually, that, argue as you like, he has a profound and ineradicable consciousness of what he calls the freedom of his will. But Hume follows him even here, though only in a note, as if he thought the extinction of so transparent a sophism hardly worthy of the dignity of his text.

"The prevalence of the doctrine of liberty may be accounted for from another cause, viz. a false sensation, or seeming experience, which we have, or may have, of liberty or indifference in many of our actions. The necessity of any action, whether of matter or of mind, is not, properly speaking, a quality in the agent, but in any thinking or intelligent being who may consider the action; and it consists chiefly in the determination of his thoughts to infer the existence of that action from some preceding objects; as liberty, when

opposed to necessity, is nothing but the want of that determination, and a certain looseness or indifference which we feel, in passing or not passing, from the idea of any object to the idea of any succeeding one. Now we may observe that though, in *reflecting* on human actions, we seldom feel such looseness or indifference, but are commonly able to infer them with considerable certainty from their motives, and from the dispositions of the agent; yet it frequently happens, that in *performing* the actions themselves, we are sensible of something like it: And as all resembling objects are taken for each other, this has been employed as demonstrative and even intuitive proof of human liberty. We feel that our actions are subject to our will on most occasions; and imagine we feel, that the will itself is subject to nothing, because, when by a denial of it we are provoked to try, we feel that it moves easily every way, and produces an image of itself (or a *Velleity* as it is called in the schools), even on that side on which it did not settle. This image or faint notion, we persuade ourselves, could at that time have been completed into the thing itself; because, should that be denied, we find upon a second trial that at present it can. We consider not that the fantastical desire of showing liberty is here the motive of our actions." —(IV. p. 110, *note*.)

Moreover, the moment the attempt is made to give a definite meaning to the words, the supposed opposition between free will and necessity turns out to be a mere verbal dispute.

"For what is meant by liberty, when applied to voluntary actions? We cannot surely mean, that actions have so little connexion with motive, inclinations, and circumstances, that one does not follow with a certain degree of uniformity from the other, and that one affords no inference by which we can conclude the existence of the other. For these are plain and acknowleged matters of fact. By liberty, then, we can only mean *a power of acting or not acting according to the determinations of the will*; that is, if we choose to remain at

rest, we may; if we choose to move, we also may. Now this hypothetical liberty is universally allowed to belong to every one who is not a prisoner and in chains. Here then is no subject of dispute."—(IV. p. 111.)

Half the controversies about the freedom of the will would have had no existence, if this pithy paragraph had been well pondered by those who oppose the doctrine of necessity. For they rest upon the absurd presumption that the proposition, "I can do as I like," is contradictory to the doctrine of necessity. The answer is; nobody doubts that, at any rate within certain limits, you can do as you like. But what determines your likings and dislikings? Did you make your own constitution? Is it your contrivance that one thing is pleasant and another is painful? And even if it were, why did you prefer to make it after the one fashion rather than the other? The passionate assertion of the consciousness of their freedom, which is the favourite refuge of the opponents of the doctrine of necessity, is mere futility, for nobody denies it. What they really have to do, if they would upset the necessarian argument, is to prove that they are free to associate any emotion whatever with any idea whatever; to like pain as much as pleasure; vice as much as virtue; in short, to prove, that, whatever may be the fixity of order of the universe of things, that of thought is given over to chance.

In the second part of this remarkable essay, Hume considers the real, or supposed, immoral consequences of the doctrine of necessity, premising the weighty observation that

"When any opinion leads to absurdity, it is certainly false; but it is not certain that an opinion is false because it is of dangerous consequence."—(IV. p. 112.)

And, therefore, that the attempt to refute an opinion by a picture of its dangerous consequences to religion and morality, is as illogical as it is reprehensible.

It is said, in the first place, that necessity destroys responsibility; that, as it is usually put, we have no right to praise or blame actions that cannot be helped. Hume's reply amounts to this, that the very idea of responsibility implies the belief in the necessary connexion of certain actions with certain states of the mind. A person is held responsible only for those acts which are preceded by a certain intention; and, as we cannot see, or hear, or feel, an intention, we can only reason out its existence on the principle that like effects have like causes.

If a man is found by the police busy with "jemmy" and dark lantern at a jeweller's shop door over night, the magistrate before whom he is brought the next morning, reasons from those effects to their causes in the fellow's "burglarious" ideas and volitions, with perfect confidence, and punishes him accordingly. And it is quite clear that such a proceeding would be grossly unjust, if the links of the logical process were other than necessarily connected together. The advocate who should attempt to get the man off on the plea that his client need not necessarily have had a felonious intent, would hardly waste his time more, if he tried to prove that the sum of all the angles of a triangle is not two right angles, but three.

A man's moral responsibility for his acts has, in fact, nothing to do with the causation of these acts, but depends on the frame of mind which accompanies them. Common language tells us this, when it uses "well-disposed" as the equivalent of "good," and "evil-minded"

as that of "wicked." If A does something which puts B in a violent passion, it is quite possible to admit that B's passion is the necessary consequence of A's act, and yet to believe that B's fury is morally wrong, or that he ought to control it. In fact, a calm bystander would reason with both on the assumption of moral necessity. He would say to A, "You were wrong in doing a thing which you knew (that is, of the necessity of which you were convinced) would irritate B." And he would say to B, "You are wrong to give way to passion, for you know its evil effects"—that is the necessary connection between yielding to passion and evil.

So far, therefore, from necessity destroying moral responsibility, it is the foundation of all praise and blame; and moral admiration reaches its climax in the ascription of necessary goodness to the Deity.

To the statement of another consequence of the necessarian doctrine, that, if there be a God, he must be the cause of all evil as well as of all good, Hume gives no real reply—probably because none is possible. But then, if this conclusion is distinctly and unquestionably deducible from the doctrine of necessity, it is no less unquestionably a direct consequence of every known form of monotheism. If God is the cause of all things, he must be the cause of evil among the rest; if he is omniscient, he must have the fore-knowledge of evil; if he is almighty, he must possess the power of preventing, or of extinguishing evil. And to say that an all-knowing and all-powerful being is not responsible for what happens, because he only permits it, is, under its intellectual aspect, a piece of childish sophistry; while, as to the moral look of it, one has only to ask any decently honourable man, whether, under like cir-

cumstances, he would try to get rid of his responsibility by such a plea.

Hume's *Inquiry* appeared in 1748. He does not refer to Anthony Collins' essay on Liberty, published thirty-three years before, in which the same question is treated to the same effect, with singular force and lucidity. It may be said, perhaps, that it is not wonderful that the two freethinkers should follow the same line of reasoning; but no such theory will account for the fact that in 1754, the famous Calvinistic divine, Jonathan Edwards, President of the College of New Jersey, produced, in the interests of the straitest orthodoxy, a demonstration of the necessarian thesis, which has never been equalled in power, and certainly has never been refuted.

In the ninth section of the fourth part of Edwards' *Inquiry*, he has to deal with the Arminian objection to the Calvinistic doctrine that "it makes God the author of sin"; and it is curious to watch the struggle between the theological controversialist, striving to ward off an admission which he knows will be employed to damage his side, and the acute logician, conscious that, in some shape or other, the admission must be made. Beginning with a *tu quoque*, that the Arminian doctrine involves consequences as bad as the Calvinistic view, he proceeds to object to the term "author of sin," though he ends by admitting that, in a certain sense, it is applicable; he proves from Scripture, that God is the disposer and orderer of sin; and then, by an elaborate false analogy with the darkness resulting from the absence of the sun, endeavours to suggest that he is only the author of it in a negative sense; and, finally, he takes refuge in the conclusion that, though

God is the orderer and disposer of those deeds which, considered in relation to their agents, are morally evil, yet, inasmuch as His purpose has all along been infinitely good, they are not evil relatively to Him.

And this, of course, may be perfectly true; but if true, it is inconsistent with the attribute of Omnipotence. It is conceivable that there should be no evil in the world; that which is conceivable is certainly possible; if it were possible for evil to be non-existent, the maker of the world, who, though foreknowing the existence of evil in that world, did not prevent it, either did not really desire it should not exist, or could not prevent its existence. It might be well for those who inveigh against the logical consequences of necessarianism to bethink them of the logical consequences of theism; which are not only the same, when the attribute of Omniscience is ascribed to the Deity, but which bring out, from the existence of moral evil, a hopeless conflict between the attributes of Infinite Benevolence and Infinite Power, which, with no less assurance, are affirmed to appertain to the Divine Being.

Kant's mode of dealing with the doctrine of necessity is very singular. That the phenomena of the mind follow fixed relations of cause and effect is, to him, as unquestionable as it is to Hume. But then there is the *Ding an sich*, the *Noumenon*, or Kantian equivalent for the substance of the soul. This, being out of the phenomenal world, is subject to none of the laws of phenomena, and is consequently as absolutely free, and as completely powerless, as a mathematical point, *in vacuo*, would be. Hence volition is uncaused, so far as it belongs to the noumenon; but, necessary, so far as it takes effect in the phenomenal world.

Since Kant is never weary of telling us that we know nothing whatever, and can know nothing, about the noumenon, except as the hypothetical subject of any number of negative predicates; the information that it is free, in the sense of being out of reach of the law of causation, is about as valuable as the assertion that it is neither grey, nor blue, nor square. For practical purposes, it must be admitted that the inward possession of such a noumenal libertine does not amount to much for people whose actual existence is made up of nothing but definitely regulated phenomena. When the good and evil angels fought for the dead body of Moses, its presence must have been of about the same value to either of the contending parties, as that of Kant's noumenon, in the battle of impulses which rages in the breast of man. Metaphysicians, as a rule, are sadly deficient in the sense of humour; or they would surely abstain from advancing propositions which, when stripped of the verbiage in which they are disguised, appear to the profane eye to be bare shams, naked but not ashamed.

CHAPTER XI.

THE PRINCIPLES OF MORALS.

In his autobiography, Hume writes :—

"In the same year [1752] was published at London my *Inquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals;* which in my own opinion (who ought not to judge on that subject) is of all my writings, historical, philosophical, and literary, incomparably the best. It came unnoticed and unobserved into the world."

It may commonly be noticed that the relative value which an author ascribes to his own works rarely agrees with the estimate formed of them by his readers; who criticise the products, without either the power or the wish to take into account the pains which they may have cost the producer. Moreover, the clear and dispassionate common sense of the *Inquiry concerning the Principles of Morals* may have tasted flat after the highly-seasoned *Inquiry concerning the Human Understanding.* Whether the public like to be deceived, or not, may be open to question; but it is beyond a doubt that they love to be shocked in a pleasant and mannerly way. Now Hume's speculations on moral questions are not so remote from those of respectable professors, like Hutcheson, or saintly prelates, such as Butler, as to present any striking

novelty. And they support the cause of righteousness in a cool, reasonable, indeed slightly patronising fashion, eminently in harmony with the mind of the eighteenth century; which admired virtue very much, if she would only avoid the rigour which the age called fanaticism, and the fervour which it called enthusiasm.

Having applied the ordinary methods of scientific inquiry to the intellectual phenomena of the mind, it was natural that Hume should extend the same mode of investigation to its moral phenomena; and, in the true spirit of a natural philosopher, he commences by selecting a group of those states of consciousness with which every one's personal experience must have made him familiar: in the expectation that the discovery of the sources of moral approbation and disapprobation, in this comparatively easy case, may furnish the means of detecting them where they are more recondite.

"We shall analyse that complication of mental qualities which form what, in common life, we call PERSONAL MERIT: We shall consider every attribute of the mind, which renders a man an object either of esteem and affection, or of hatred and contempt; every habit or sentiment or faculty, which if ascribed to any person, implies either praise or blame, and may enter into any panegyric or satire of his character and manners. The quick sensibility which, on this head, is so universal among mankind, gives a philosopher sufficient assurance that he can never be considerably mistaken in framing the catalogue, or incurs any danger of misplacing the objects of his contemplation: He needs only enter into his own breast for a moment, and consider whether he should or should not desire to have this or that quality assigned to him, and whether such or such an imputation would proceed from a friend or an enemy. The very nature of language guides us almost infallibly in forming a judgment of this nature; and as every tongue possesses one set of words which are taken in a

good sense, and another in the opposite, the least acquaintance with the idiom suffices, without any reasoning, to direct us in collecting and arranging the estimable or blamable qualities of men. The only object of reasoning is to discover the circumstances on both sides, which are common to these qualities; to observe that particular in which the estimable qualities agree on the one hand, and the blamable on the other, and thence to reach the foundation of ethics, and find their universal principles, from which all censure or approbation is ultimately derived. As this is a question of fact, not of abstract science, we can only expect success by following the experimental method, and deducing general maxims from a comparison of particular instances. The other scientifical method, where a general abstract principle is first established, and is afterwards branched out into a variety of inferences and conclusions, may be more perfect in itself, but suits less the imperfection of human nature, and is a common source of illusion and mistake, in this as well as in other subjects. Men are now cured of their passion for hypotheses and systems in natural philosophy, and will hearken to no arguments but those which are derived from experience. It is full time they should attempt a like reformation in all moral disquisitions; and reject every system of ethics, however subtile or ingenious, which is not founded on fact and observation."—(IV. pp. 242—4.)

No qualities give a man a greater claim to personal merit than benevolence and justice; but if we inquire why benevolence deserves so much praise, the answer will certainly contain a large reference to the utility of that virtue to society; and as for justice, the very existence of the virtue implies that of society; public utility is its sole origin; and the measure of its usefulness is also the standard of its merit. If every man possessed everything he wanted, and no one had the power to interfere with such possession; or if no man desired that which could damage his fellow-man, justice

would have no part to play in the universe. But as Hume observes :—

"In the present disposition of the human heart, it would perhaps be difficult to find complete instances of such enlarged affections; but still we may observe that the case of families approaches towards it; and the stronger the mutual benevolence is among the individuals, the nearer it approaches, till all distinction of property be in a great measure lost and confounded among them. Between married persons, the cement of friendship is by the laws supposed so strong, as to abolish all division of possessions, and has often, in reality, the force assigned to it.[1] And it is observable that, during the ardour of new enthusiasms, when every principle is inflamed into extravagance, the community of goods has frequently been attempted; and nothing but experience of its inconveniences, from the returning or disguised selfishness of men, could make the imprudent fanatics adopt anew the ideas of justice and separate property. So true is it that this virtue derives its existence entirely from its necessary *use* to the intercourse and social state of mankind."—(IV. p. 256.)

"Were the human species so framed by nature as that each individual possessed within himself every faculty requisite both for his own preservation and for the propagation of his kind: Were all society and intercourse cut off between man and man by the primary intention of the Supreme Creator: It seems evident that so solitary a being would be as much incapable of justice as of social discourse and conversation. Where mutual regard and forbearance serve to no manner of purpose, they would never direct the conduct of any reasonable man. The headlong course of the passions would be checked by no reflection on future consequences. And as each

[1] Family affection in the eighteenth century may have been stronger than in the nineteenth; but Hume's bachelor inexperience can surely alone explain his strange account of the suppositions of the marriage law of that day, and their effects. The law certainly abolished all division of possessions, but it did so by making the husband sole proprietor.

man is here supposed to love himself alone, and to depend only on himself and his own activity for safety and happiness, he would, on every occasion, to the utmost of his power, challenge the preference above every other being, to none of which he is bound by any ties, either of nature or of interest.

"But suppose the conjunction of the sexes to be established in nature, a family immediately arises; and particular rules being found requisite for its subsistence, these are immediately embraced, though without comprehending the rest of mankind within their prescriptions. Suppose that several families unite together in one society, which is totally disjoined from all others, the rules which preserve peace and order enlarge themselves to the utmost extent of that society; but becoming then entirely useless, lose their force when carried one step further. But again, suppose that several distinct societies maintain a kind of intercourse for mutual convenience and advantage, the boundaries of justice still grow larger, in proportion to the largeness of men's views and the force of their mutual connexion. History, experience, reason, sufficiently instruct us in this natural progress of human sentiments, and in the gradual enlargement of our regard to justice in proportion as we become acquainted with the extensive utility of that virtue."—(IV. pp. 262—4.)

The moral obligation of justice and the rights of property are by no means diminished by this exposure of the purely utilitarian basis on which they rest:—

"For what stronger foundation can be desired or conceived for any duty, than to observe that human society, or even human nature, could not subsist without the establishment of it, and will still arrive at greater degrees of happiness and perfection, the more inviolable the regard is which is paid to that duty?

"The dilemma seems obvious: As justice evidently tends to promote public utility, and to support civil society, the sentiment of justice is either derived from our reflecting on that tendency, or, like hunger, thirst, and other appetites, resentment, love of life, attachment to offspring, and other

passions, arises from a simple original instinct in the human heart, which nature has implanted for like salutary purposes. If the latter be the case, it follows that property, which is the object of justice, is also distinguished by a simple original instinct, and is not ascertained by any argument or reflection. But who is there that ever heard of such an instinct? Or is this a subject in which new discoveries can be made? We may as well expect to discover in the body new senses which had before escaped the observation of all mankind." —(IV. pp. 273, 4.)

The restriction of the object of justice to property, in this passage, is singular. Pleasure and pain can hardly be included under the term property, and yet justice surely deals largely with the withholding of the former, or the infliction of the latter, by men on one another. If a man bars another from a pleasure which he would otherwise enjoy, or actively hurts him without good reason, the latter is said to be injured as much as if his property had been interfered with. Here, indeed, it may be readily shown, that it is as much the interest of society that men should not interfere with one another's freedom, or mutually inflict positive or negative pain, as that they should not meddle with one another's property; and hence the obligation of justice in such matters may be deduced. But, if a man merely thinks ill of another, or feels maliciously towards him without due cause, he is properly said to be unjust. In this case it would be hard to prove that any injury is done to society by the evil thought; but there is no question that it will be stigmatised as an injustice; and the offender himself, in another frame of mind, is often ready enough to admit that he has failed to be just towards his neighbour. However, it may plausibly be said, that so slight a barrier lies between

thought and speech, that any moral quality attached to the latter is easily transferred to the former; and that, since open slander is obviously opposed to the interests of society, injustice of thought, which is silent slander, must become inextricably associated with the same blame.

But, granting the utility to society of all kinds of benevolence and justice, why should the quality of those virtues involve the sense of moral obligation?

Hume answers this question in the fifth section, entitled, *Why Utility Pleases*. He repudiates the deduction of moral approbation from self-love, and utterly denies that we approve of benevolent or just actions because we think of the benefits which they are likely to confer indirectly on ourselves. The source of the approbation with which we view an act useful to society must be sought elsewhere; and, in fact, is to be found in that feeling which is called sympathy.

"No man is absolutely indifferent to the happiness and misery of others. The first has a natural tendency to give pleasure, the second pain. This every one may find in himself. It is not probable that these principles can be resolved into principles more simple and universal, whatever attempts may have been made for that purpose."—(IV. p. 294, *Note.*)

Other men's joys and sorrows are not spectacles at which we remain unmoved:—

"... The view of the former, whether in its causes or effects, like sunshine, or the prospect of well-cultivated plains (to carry our pretensions no higher) communicates a secret joy and satisfaction; the appearance of the latter, like a lowering cloud or barren landscape, throws a melancholy damp over the imagination. And this concession being once made, the difficulty is over; and a natural unforced interpretation of the phenomena of human life will afterwards, we hope, prevail among all speculative inquirers."—(IV. p. 320.)

The moral approbation, therefore, with which we regard acts of justice or benevolence rests upon their utility to society, because the perception of that utility or, in other words, of the pleasure which they give to other men, arouses a feeling of sympathetic pleasure in ourselves. The feeling of obligation to be just, or of the duty of justice, arises out of that association of moral approbation or disapprobation with one's own actions, which is what we call conscience. To fail in justice, or in benevolence, is to be displeased with oneself. But happiness is impossible without inward self-approval; and, hence, every man who has any regard to his own happiness and welfare, will find his best reward in the practice of every moral duty. On this topic Hume expends much eloquence.

"But what philosophical truths can be more advantageous to society than these here delivered, which represent virtue in all her genuine and most engaging charms, and make us approach her with ease, familiarity, and affection? The dismal dress falls off, with which many divines and some philosophers have covered her; and nothing appears but gentleness, humanity, beneficence, affability; nay, even at proper intervals, play, frolic, and gaiety. She talks not of useless austerities and rigours, suffering and self-denial. She declares that her sole purpose is to make her votaries, and all mankind, during every period of their existence, if possible, cheerful and happy; nor does she ever willingly part with any pleasure but in hopes of ample compensation in some other period of their lives. The sole trouble which she demands is that of just calculation, and a steady preference of the greater happiness. And if any austere pretenders approach her, enemies to joy and pleasure, she either rejects them as hypocrites and deceivers, or if she admit them in her train, they are ranked, however, among the least favoured of her votaries.

"And, indeed, to drop all figurative expression, what hopes can we ever have of engaging mankind to a practice which we confess full of austerity and rigour? Or what theory of morals can ever serve any useful purpose, unless it can show, by a particular detail, that all the duties which it recommends are also the true interest of each individual? The peculiar advantage of the foregoing system seem to be, that it furnishes proper mediums for that purpose."—(IV. p. 360.)

In this pæan to virtue, there is more of the dance measure than will sound appropriate in the ears of most of the pilgrims who toil painfully, not without many a stumble and many a bruise, along the rough and steep roads which lead to the higher life.

Virtue is undoubtedly beneficent; but the man is to be envied to whom her ways seem in anywise playful. And, though she may not talk much about suffering and self-denial, her silence on that topic may be accounted for on the principle *ça va sans dire*. The calculation of the greatest happiness is not performed quite so easily as a rule of three sum; while, in the hour of temptation, the question will crop up, whether, as something has to be sacrificed, a bird in the hand is not worth two in the bush; whether it may not be as well to give up the problematical greater happiness in the future, for a certain great happiness in the present, and

> "Buy the merry madness of one hour
> With the long irksomeness of following time."[1]

If mankind cannot be engaged in practices "full of austerity and rigour," by the love of righteousness and the fear of evil, without seeking for other compensation than that which flows from the gratification of such love and the consciousness of escape from debasement, they

[1] Ben Jonson's *Cynthia's Revels*, act i.

are in a bad case. For they will assuredly find that virtue presents no very close likeness to the sportive leader of the joyous hours in Hume's rosy picture; but that she is an awful Goddess, whose ministers are the Furies, and whose highest reward is peace.

It is not improbable that Hume would have qualified all this as enthusiasm or fanaticism, or both; but he virtually admits it:—

"Now, as virtue is an end, and is desirable on its own account, without fee or reward, merely for the immediate satisfaction which it conveys, it is requisite that there should be some sentiment which it touches: some internal taste or feeling, or whatever you please to call it, which distinguishes moral good and evil, and which embraces the one and rejects the other.

"Thus the distinct boundaries and offices of *reason* and of *taste* are easily ascertained. The former conveys the knowledge of truth and falsehood: The latter gives the sentiment of beauty and deformity, vice and virtue. The one discovers objects as they really stand in nature, without addition or diminution: The other has a productive faculty, and gilding and staining all natural objects with the colours borrowed from internal sentiment, raises in a manner a new creation. Reason being cool and disengaged, is no motive to action, and directs only the impulse received from appetite or inclination, by showing us the means of attaining happiness or avoiding misery. Taste, as it gives pleasure or pain, and thereby constitutes happiness or misery, becomes a motive to action, and is the first spring or impulse to desire and volition. From circumstances and relations known or supposed, the former leads us to the discovery of the concealed and unknown. After all circumstances and relations are laid before us, the latter makes us feel from the whole a new sentiment of blame or approbation. The standard of the one, being founded on the nature of things, is external and inflexible, even by the will of the Supreme Being: The standard of

the other, arising from the internal frame and constitution of animals, is ultimately derived from the Supreme Will, which bestowed on each being its peculiar nature, and arranged the several classes and orders of existence."—(IV. pp. 376–7.)

Hume has not discussed the theological theory of the obligations of morality, but it is obviously in accordance with his view of the nature of those obligations. Under its theological aspect, morality is obedience to the will of God; and the ground for such obedience is two fold; either we ought to obey God because He will punish us if we disobey Him, which is an argument based on the utility of obedience; or our obedience ought to flow from our love towards God, which is an argument based on pure feeling and for which no reason can be given. For, if any man should say that he takes no pleasure in the contemplation of the ideal of perfect holiness, or, in other words, that he does not love God, the attempt to argue him into acquiring that pleasure would be as hopeless as the endeavour to persuade Peter Bell of the "witchery of the soft blue sky."

In whichever way we look at the matter, morality is based on feeling, not on reason; though reason alone is competent to trace out the effects of our actions and thereby dictate conduct. Justice is founded on the love of one's neighbour; and goodness is a kind of beauty. The moral law, like the laws of physical nature, rests in the long run upon instinctive intuitions, and is neither more nor less "innate" and "necessary" than they are. Some people cannot by any means be got to understand the first book of Euclid; but the truths of mathematics are no less necessary and

binding on the great mass of mankind. Some there are who cannot feel the difference between the *Sonata Appassionata* and *Cherry Ripe;* or between a grave-stone-cutter's cherub and the Apollo Belvidere; but the canons of art are none the less acknowledged. While some there may be, who, devoid of sympathy are incapable of a sense of duty; but neither does their existence affect the foundations of morality. Such pathological deviations from true manhood are merely the halt, the lame, and the blind of the world of consciousness; and the anatomist of the mind leaves them aside, as the anatomist of the body would ignore abnormal specimens.

And as there are Pascals and Mozarts, Newtons and Raffaelles, in whom the innate faculty for science or art seems to need but a touch to spring into full vigour, and through whom the human race obtains new possibilities of knowledge and new conceptions of beauty: so there have been men of moral genius, to whom we owe ideals of duty and visions of moral perfection, which ordinary mankind could never have attained; though, happily for them, they can feel the beauty of a vision, which lay beyond the reach of their dull imaginations, and count life well spent in shaping some faint image of it in the actual world.



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LOCKE







LOCKE

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NOTE.

In writing the chapters on Locke's Life, I have derived much information from the biographies of Lord King and Mr. Fox Bourne, especially from the latter, which contains a large amount of most interesting documents never before printed. In a work like the present, where numerous foot-notes would be out of place, I am obliged to content myself with this general acknowledgment. I may add that I have also referred to several other authorities, both printed and in manuscript; and, in some cases, I believe that my account will be found more precise than that given in the larger biographies.



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LOCKE.

CHAPTER I.

LOCKE'S BOYHOOD—HIS EARLY LIFE IN OXFORD.

JOHN LOCKE, perhaps the greatest, but certainly the most characteristic, of English philosophers, was born at Wrington, a pleasant village in the north of Somersetshire, August 29, 1632. His family, however, resided in the village of Pensford, and the parish of Publow, within a few miles of Bristol. It was there, probably, that Locke spent the greater part of his early life. His mother appears to have died while he was young. From his father, John Locke (b. 1606), who seems to have inherited a fair estate, and who practised, with some success, as a country attorney, he probably derived, if not his earliest instruction, at least some of his earliest influences and some of his most sterling characteristics. "From Mr. Locke I have often heard of his father," says Lady Masham in a MS. letter quoted by Mr. Fox-Bourne in his Life of Locke, "that he was a man of parts. Mr. Locke never mentioned him but with great respect and affection. His father used a conduct towards him when young that he often spoke of afterwards with great approbation. It

was the being severe to him by keeping him in much awe, and at a distance, when he was a boy, but relaxing, still by degrees, of that severity as he grew up to be a man, till, he being become capable of it, he lived perfectly with him as a friend. And I remember he has told me that his father, after he was a man, solemnly asked his pardon for having struck him once in a passion when he was a boy."

Locke's boyhood coincided pretty nearly with the troubles of the Civil Wars. "I no sooner perceived myself in the world," he wrote in 1660, "but I found myself in a storm which has lasted almost hitherto." His father, when Locke was hardly ten years old, publicly announced, in the parish church of Publow, his assent to the protest of the Long Parliament, and, a few weeks afterwards, took the field, on the Parliamentary side, as captain of a troop of horse in a regiment of volunteers. Though the fortunes of the family undoubtedly suffered from this step on the part of the young attorney, the political and religious interests which it created and kept alive in his household must have contributed, in no small degree, to shape the character and determine the sympathies of his elder son.

Locke, then, may be regarded as having been fortunate in his early surroundings. Born in one of the more charming of the rural districts of England, not far, however, from a city which was then one of the most important centres of commerce and politics; sprung from respectable and well-to-do parents, of whom the father, at least, possessed more than ordinary intelligence; accustomed, from his earliest boyhood, to watch the progress of great events, and to listen to the discussion of great and stirring questions: there seems to have been nothing in

his early life to retard or mar the development of his genius, and much that we may not unreasonably connect with the marked peculiarities, both moral and intellectual, of his subsequent career.

It was probably in the year 1646 that, through the interest of Colonel Popham, a friend and client of his father, Locke was admitted at Westminster School, where, probably in the following year, he was elected on the foundation. Here he must have remained about six years, till his election to a Westminster Studentship at Christ Church, Oxford, in 1652. Of the manner in which Locke spent these years we have no definite information. The stern disciplinarian, Dr. Busby, had been head master for about eight years when he entered the school, and among his schoolfellows, senior to him by about a year, were Dryden and South. The friends whom he made at Westminster, though highly respectable in after-life, did not achieve any great reputation. Of the studies which then constituted the ordinary school curriculum, his matured opinions are to be found in the "Thoughts concerning Education," which will be described in a subsequent chapter. To judge from this book, the impressions left on Locke's mind by our English public school education were not of a pleasant or favourable kind.

Locke appears to have commenced his residence at Christ Church in the Michaelmas Term of 1652, soon after he had turned twenty years of age. His matriculation before the Vice-Chancellor bears date Nov. 27. Since the outbreak of the Civil Wars, both the University and the College had undergone many vicissitudes. At the moment when Locke entered, Cromwell was Chancellor, and Dr. John Owen, who was destined to be for some time the leading resident, had been recently ap-

pointed Dean of Christ Church and Vice-Chancellor of the University. Owen was an Independent, and, for a divine of that age, a man of remarkably tolerant and liberal views. Though, then as now, a dignitary in Owen's position probably had and could have but little intercourse with the junior members of his society, it is not improbable that Locke may have derived his first bias towards those opinions on the question of religious toleration, for which he afterwards became so famous, from the publications and the practice of the puritan Dean of Christ Church. Locke's tutor was a Mr. Cole, afterwards Principal of St. Mary Hall, but of his relations with his pupil we hear nothing of any importance. Wood calls him a "fanatical tutor," by which, of course, he does not mean more than that he was a puritan.

During the Civil Wars, the discipline and reputation of the Universities, however we may apportion the blame, seem to have suffered most severely. In these troublous times, indeed, it could hardly be otherwise. There is considerable evidence to show that, in the Little or Barbone's Parliament of 1653, there was a serious attempt to suppress the Colleges and Universities altogether, and to apply the proceeds of their estates, as Clarendon tells us, "for the public service, and to ease the people from the payment of taxes and contributions." If such an attempt ever had any chance of success — and from an oration of Dr. Owen we may infer that it had—it must have spread consternation amongst University circles, and been a frequent subject of conversation during the early period of Locke's residence in Oxford. But the Puritan party, which was now in the ascendant, was determined that, at any rate, no handle should be given to the enemy by any lack of discipline or by the infre-

quency of religious exercises. "Frequent preaching in every house," Anthony à Wood tells us, "was the chief matter aimed at" by the Visitors appointed by Cromwell in 1652. Thus, on June 27, 1653, they ordered that "all Bachelors of Arts and Undergraduates in Colleges and Halls be required, every Lord's day, to give an account to some person of known ability and piety of the sermons they had heard and their attendance on other religious exercises that day. The Heads also or Deputies of the said Societies, with all above the Degree of Bachelor, were then ordered to be personally present at the performance of the said exercise, and to take care that it be attended with prayer and such other duties of religion as are proper to such a meeting." In addition to the Sunday observances, there were also, in most Colleges, if not in all, one or two sermons or religious meetings in the course of the week. Locke, if we may judge from his character in later years, must have occasionally found these tedious, and doubtless lengthy, exercises somewhat irksome and unprofitable. But we do not meet in his writings with any definite complaints of them, as we do of the scholastic disputations and some other parts of the academical course as pursued at that time. Of the disputations, which then constituted a very important element in the University curriculum, he expresses an unfavourable, perhaps too unfavourable an opinion. Writing in 1690, in the "Thoughts concerning Education," he says: "If the use and end of right reasoning be to have right notions and a right judgment of things, to distinguish between truth and falsehood, right and wrong, and to act accordingly, be sure not to let your son be bred up in the art and formality of disputing—either practising it himself or admiring it in others – unless, instead of an able man, you desire to have him an insig-

nificant wrangler, opiniater in discourse, and priding himself in contradicting others: or, which is worse, questioning everything, and thinking there is no such thing as truth to be sought, but only victory, in disputing. There cannot be anything so disingenuous, so unbecoming a gentleman, or any one who pretends to be a rational creature, as not to yield to plain reason and the conviction of clear arguments. Is there anything more inconsistent with civil conversation and the end of all debate, than not to take an answer, though ever so full and satisfactory? For this, in short, is the way and perfection of logical disputes, that the opponent never takes any answer, nor the respondent ever yields to any argument." With the logic and rhetoric, the Latin speaking and Latin writing, then in vogue, Locke is almost equally discontented. In fact, he looked back, in after-life, with little gratitude on the somewhat dry course of studies which the University then prescribed to its younger scholars. "I have often heard him say, in reference to his first years spent in the University," says Lady Masham, "that he had so small satisfaction there from his studies, as finding very little light brought thereby to his understanding, that he became discontented with his manner of life, and wished his father had rather designed him for anything else than what he was destined to, apprehending that his no greater progress in knowledge proceeded from his not being fitted or capacitated to be a scholar." We must, however, by no means infer that Locke had not derived considerable benefit from the discipline which he disparages. At any rate, the scholastic teaching of Oxford had a large share in forming, by reaction, many of his most characteristic opinions, while the Essay, in almost every page, bears distinctive marks of his early studies.

Notwithstanding his depreciation, amounting often to ridicule, of the subjects he had learnt in his youth, we can hardly doubt that, if Locke had been brought up in an University where logic and philosophy did not form part of the course, his greatest work would never have been written.

Mr. Fox-Bourne attempts to supply a detailed account of the lectures which Locke attended, and the course of studies which he pursued, during his undergraduate and bachelor days. This account, however, betrays an innocent belief in the rigid enforcement and observance of University and College statutes which, I am sorry to say, I cannot share. Minute regulations regarding courses of study and attendance at lectures are apt very soon to fall into desuetude, and it is impossible now to reconstruct with any accuracy, from the perusal of merely formal documents, a plan of the student life of the Commonwealth. It is to be much regretted that Locke and his contemporaries have not left us more specific information on the subject. All we can now say is that, if the authorities duly enforced their statutes and regulations, especially those relating to professorial lectures, many of which were appointed to be given at eight o'clock in the morning, the students of those days had by no means an easier time of it than their successors, even in these days of competition and examinations.

The stated regulations and prescribed statutes of a seat of learning have, however, often far less to do with the formation of a student's mind than the society of the young men of his own age with whom his residence throws him into contact. Young men often educate one another far more effectually than they can be educated by their tutors or their books. The mutual confidences, the lively

no means idle. In 1661 he began a series of common-place books, often containing long articles on the subjects which were occupying his thoughts at the time. It is, moreover, to the period immediately preceding or immediately following the Restoration, that Mr. Fox-Bourne attributes an unpublished and till recently unknown Essay, entitled, "Reflections upon the Roman Commonwealth." Many of the remarks in this Essay already show what we should call liberal opinions in religion and politics, and anticipate views long afterwards propounded in the works on government and toleration. The religion instituted by Numa is idealized, as having insisted on only two articles of faith, the goodness of the gods, and the necessity of worshipping them, "in which worship the chief of all was to be innocent, good, and just." Thus it avoided "creating heresies and schisms," and "narrowing the bottom of religion by clogging it with creeds and catechisms and endless niceties about the essences, properties, and attributes of God."

Of more interest, perhaps, is another unpublished treatise, written just after the Restoration, in which Locke asks, and answers in the affirmative, the following question: Whether the civil magistrate may lawfully impose and determine the use of indifferent things in reference to religious worship. This tract seems to have been intended as a remonstrance with those of the author's own party who questioned any right in the civil magistrate to interfere in religious matters, and who, therefore, were ready to reject with disdain the assurances of compromise and moderation contained in the king's declaration on ecclesiastical affairs, issued at the beginning of his reign. Locke, at that time, like many other moderate men, seems to have entertained the most sanguine hopes of pacification

and good government under the rule of the new monarch. "As for myself," he writes, "there is no one can have a greater respect and veneration for authority than I. I no sooner perceived myself in the world, but I found myself in a storm, which has lasted almost hitherto, and therefore cannot but entertain the approaches of a calm with the greatest joy and satisfaction." "I find that a general freedom is but a general bondage, that the popular asserters of public liberty are the greatest ingrossers of it too, and not unfitly called its keepers." This reaction, however, against the past, and these sanguine expectations of the future, can have lasted but a short time. The tendencies of the new government were soon apparent, and the pamphlet was never published.

CHAPTER II.

MEDICAL STUDIES—PUBLIC EMPLOYMENTS—CONNEXION WITH SHAFTESBURY.

LOCKE, at the time of his father's death and his entrance on college office, was in his twenty-ninth year. At the election of college officers on Christmas Eve, 1662, he was transferred from the Greek Lectureship to the Lectureship in Rhetoric, and, on the 23rd of December in the following year, he was again transferred to another office. This office was the Censorship of Moral Philosophy (the Senior Censorship); the Censorship of Natural Philosophy (the Junior Censorship) he appears never to have held. On the 23rd of December, 1665, he is no longer in office, being now merely one of the twenty senior M.A. students, called "Theologi," who were bound to be in priests' orders. Of the manner in which Locke discharged his duties as a lecturer we have no record. He seems also to have served in the capacity of tutor to several undergraduates at this period, but of his relations to his pupils we, unfortunately, know next to nothing.

How is it that Locke, holding a clerical studentship, was not a clergyman? The disturbed condition of the Church and the Universities during the last quarter of a century had probably led to great laxity in the enforcement of college statutes and by-laws. Moreover, for a time, it

would seem, he seriously contemplated taking the step of entering holy orders, and the authorities of his college would probably be unwilling to force upon him a hasty decision. At length, however, he finally abandoned this idea, deciding in favour of the profession of physic. In the ordinary course he would have forfeited his studentship, but he was fortunate enough to obtain a royal dispensation (by no means an uncommon mode of intervention at that time), retaining him in his place, "that he may still have further time to prosecute his studies." This dispensation is dated Nov. 14, 1666.

Meanwhile, Locke had paid his first visit to the Continent. The occasion of it was an embassy to the Elector of Brandenburg, whose alliance or neutrality it was sought to obtain in the then pending war with Holland. Sir Walter Vane was head of the embassy, and Locke, who probably owed his nomination to the interest of his old schoolfellow, William Godolphin, was appointed secretary. They left England in the middle of November, 1665, and arrived at Cleves, then a residence-place of the Electors, on the 30th of the same month (Dec. 9, N.S.). Here they remained for two months, the mission coming to nothing, in consequence of the English Government being unable or unwilling to advance the money which the Elector required as the price of his adhesion. The state-papers addressed by the Ambassador to the Government at home are mainly in Locke's handwriting, but far more interesting than these are the private letters addressed by Locke to his friends, Mr. Strachey, of Sutton Court, near Bristol, and the celebrated Robert Boyle. These are full of graphic touches descriptive of the manners and peculiarities of the people among whom he found himself. Like a conscientious sight-seer, he availed himself of the various

opportunities of observing their eating and drinking, attended their devotions, whether Catholic, Calvinist, or Lutheran, submitted himself to be bored by poetasters and sucking theologians, and consoled himself for the difficulty of finding a pair of gloves by noting the tardiness of German commerce. Though he had "thought for a while to take leave of all University affairs," he found himself ridden pitilessly by an "academic goblin."

"I no sooner was got here, but I was welcomed with a divinity disputation. I was no sooner rid of that, but I found myself up to the ears in poetry, and overwhelmed in Helicon." "But my University goblin left me not so; for the next day, when I thought I had been rode out only to airing, I was had to a foddering of chopped hay or logic forsooth! Poor *materia prima* was canvassed cruelly, stripped of all the gay dress of her forms, and shown naked to us, though, I must confess, I had not eyes good enough to see her. The young monks (which one would not guess by their looks) are subtle people, and dispute as eagerly for *materia prima* as if they were to make their dinner on it, and, perhaps, sometimes it is all their meal, for which others' charity is more to be blamed than their stomachs. . . . The truth is, here hog-shearing is much in its glory, and our disputing in Oxford comes as far short of it as the rhetoric of Carfax does that of Billingsgate."

At a dinner, described with a good deal of humour, with the Franciscan friars, he was still pursued by his Oxford recollections:—

"The prior was a good plump fellow, that had more belly than brains; and methought was very fit to be reverenced, and not much unlike some head of a college."

One circumstance Locke noticed much to the advantage of the foreigners, namely, their good-natured toleration for each other's opinions. Writing to Boyle, he says,—

"The distance in their churches gets not into their houses. They quietly permit one another to choose their way to heaven; for I cannot observe any quarrels or animosities amongst them upon the account of religion. This good correspondence is owing partly to the power of the magistrate, and partly to the prudence and good nature of the people, who, as I find by inquiring, entertain different opinions without any secret hatred or rancour."

And though, like most Englishmen, of decided Protestant convictions, travelling on the Continent for the first time, Locke indulged in a good deal of merriment at the Catholic ceremonies, he pays, in one of his letters to Strachey, a cheerful tribute to the personal worth of the Catholic priests. He had not met, he says, with any people so good-natured or so civil, and he had received many courtesies from them, which he should always gratefully acknowledge.

Locke returned to England towards the end of February, 1665-6, and was at once offered the post of secretary to the Earl of Sandwich, who was on the point of setting out as ambassador to Spain. He wavered for a short time, but, though doubtful whether he had not "let slip the minute that they say every one has once in his life to make himself," he finally declined the offer. Before settling down again in Oxford, he spent a few weeks in Somersetshire, paying probably, amongst other visits, one he had promised himself to Strachey at Sutton Court, "a greater rarity than my travels have afforded me; for one may go a long way before one meets a friend." During his stay in Somersetshire, he attempted to try some experiments in the Mendip lead-mines with a barometer which had been sent to him for the purpose by Boyle. But the miners and their

wives made a successful resistance. "The sight of the engine and my desire of going down some of their gruffs gave them terrible apprehensions. The women, too, were alarmed, and think us still either projectors or conjurors."

At the beginning of May, Locke was again in his rooms in Oxford. He seems to have lost no time in setting to work afresh on the studies which might qualify him to exercise the profession of medicine. In his letters to Boyle, he makes frequent reference to chemical experiments and to collecting plants for medical purposes.

It is an unexplained circumstance that, notwithstanding a letter to the Hebdomadal Board from Lord Clarendon, then Chancellor of the University, signifying his assent to a dispensation, enabling Locke to accumulate the degrees of Bachelor and Doctor in Medicine, he never took those degrees. The obstacle may have arisen from himself, or, more probably, it may have been due to some sinister influence on the Hebdomadal Board preventing the assent of that body to the required decree. Any way, it is curious that eleven days after the date of Lord Clarendon's letter is dated the dispensation from the Crown (already referred to on page 13), enabling him to retain his studentship, notwithstanding his neglect to enter holy orders.

During the summer of 1666, we are introduced to one of the turning-points in Locke's life—his first acquaintance with Lord Shaftesbury, or, as he then was, Lord Ashley. Of the chequered career or the enigmatical character of this celebrated nobleman it is no part of my task to speak. It is enough to say that, as an advocate of religious toleration and an opponent alike of sacerdotal claims in the Church and absolutist principles in the State,

he appealed to Locke's warmest and deepest sympathies. The acquaintance was made through David Thomas, an Oxford physician, and the occasion of it was Lord Ashley's coming to Oxford to drink the Astrop waters. The duty of providing these waters (Astrop being a village at some distance from Oxford) seems to have been entrusted by Thomas to Locke, but, there having been some miscarriage, Locke waited on Lord Ashley to excuse the delay. "My lord," says Lady Masham, "in his wonted manner, received him very civilly, accepting his excuse with great easiness, and, when Mr. Locke would have taken his leave of him, would needs have him to stay supper with him, being much pleased with his conversation. But if my lord was pleased with the company of Mr. Locke, Mr. Locke was yet more so with that of my Lord Ashley." The result of this short and apparently accidental interview was the beginning of an intimate friendship, which seems never afterwards to have been broken, and which exercised a decisive influence on the rest of Locke's career.

On September 2 of this year broke out the Great Fire of London, which raged without intermission for three days and nights. Under the date of September 3 we find in Locke's "Register," which was afterwards published in Boyle's *General History of the Air*, this curious entry :— "Dim reddish sunshine. This unusual colour of the air, which, without a cloud appearing, made the sunbeams of a strange red dim light, was very remarkable. We had then heard nothing of the fire of London ; but it appeared afterwards to be the smoke of London, then burning, which, driven this way by an easterly wind, caused this odd phenomenon." The Register, in which this entry is made, begins on June 24, 1666, and contains, with many inter-

missions, the observations made by Locke, in Oxford and London, up to June 30, 1683, on the readings of the "thermoscope," the "baroscope," and the "hygroscope," together with the direction of the wind and the state of the weather. It not only affords valuable evidence of Locke's whereabouts at different times, but also shows the interest which he took in physical research.

In the early summer of 1667, Locke appears to have taken up his residence with Lord Ashley in London, and "from that time," according to Lady Masham, "he was with my Lord Ashley as a man at home, and lived in that family much esteemed, not only by my lord, but by all the friends of the family." His residence in Lord Ashley's family was, however, probably broken by occasional visits to Oxford.

To this period of Locke's life may be assigned the unpublished *Essay concerning Toleration*, which, with so much other valuable matter, is now for the first time accessible to the general reader in Mr. Fox-Bourne's *Life*. This *Essay*, it is not improbable, was written at the suggestion, or for the guidance of Lord Ashley, and so may have been widely circulated amongst the advocates of "toleration" and "comprehension"—words which were at that time in the mouth of every man who took any interest in religion or politics. As I shall have to speak expressly of the published *Letters on Toleration*, which were written about twenty years later, and which contain substantially the same views as this earlier *Essay*, I shall not here detain the reader further than by giving him the general conclusions at which Locke had now arrived. These may be stated summarily under three heads: first, "all speculative opinions and religious worship have a clear title to universal toleration," and in these every man

may use "a perfect uncontrollable liberty, without any guilt or sin at all, provided always that it be all done sincerely and out of conscience to God, according to the best of his knowledge and persuasion;" secondly, "there are some opinions and actions which are in their natural tendency absolutely destructive to human society—as, that faith may be broken with heretics; that one is bound to broach and propagate any opinion he believes himself; and such like; and, in actions, all manner of frauds and injustice—and these the magistrate ought not to tolerate at all;" thirdly, another class of opinions and actions, inasmuch as their "influence to good or bad" depends on "the temper of the state and posture of affairs," "have a right to toleration so far only as they do not interfere with the advantages of the public, or serve any way to disturb the government." The practical result of the discussion is, that while "papists" should not "enjoy the benefit of toleration, because where they have power they think themselves bound to deny it to others," the "fanatics," as the various classes of Protestant Dissenters were then called, should be at least "tolerated," if not "comprehended" in the national church. Indeed, as to "comprehension," Locke lays down the general principle that "your articles in speculative opinions should be few and large, and your ceremonies in worship few and easy —which is latitudinism."

This must have been one of the quietest and happiest periods of Locke's life. He seems to have been unobtrusively pursuing his studies, and gradually making the acquaintance of the great world and of public affairs through the facilities which his residence with Lord Ashley afforded him. Both his own occupations and his relations to the Ashley family appear to have been of a

very miscellaneous kind. Medicine, philosophy, and politics engaged his attention by turns. To Lord Ashley and his family he was at once general adviser, doctor, and friend. In June, 1668, after consulting various other medical men, he performed on Lord Ashley a difficult operation for the purpose of removing an "imposthume in the breast," and is said thus to have saved his life. To the only child, Anthony Ashley, he acted as tutor. But, by the time the youth was seventeen, Locke was entrusted with a far more delicate business than his tuition. This was no less than finding him a wife. After other young ladies had been considered and rejected, Locke accompanied his charge on a visit to the Earl of Rutland, at Belvoir Castle, and negotiated a match with the Earl's daughter, the Lady Dorothy Manners. The match seems to have been a happy one; and Locke continued his services of general utility to the Ashley family by acting on more than one occasion as Lady Dorothy's medical attendant. On the 26th of February, 1670-1, he assisted at the birth of a son and heir, Anthony, who subsequently became third Earl of Shaftesbury, and who, as the author of the *Characteristics*, occupies a position of no inconsiderable importance in the history of English philosophy. It is on the evidence of this Earl of Shaftesbury that we learn the share taken by Locke in effecting the union of his father and mother. "My father was too young and inexperienced to choose a wife for himself, and my grandfather too much in business to choose one for him." The consequence was, that "all was thrown upon Mr. Locke, who being already so good a judge of men, my grandfather doubted not of his equal judgment in women. He departed from him, entrusted and sworn, as Abraham's head servant 'that ruled over all that he had,' and went

into a far country 'to seek for his son a wife,' whom he as successfully found."

Though so much of Locke's time seems to have been spent on medical studies and practice, he possessed no regular qualification. In 1670 another attempt had been made, but in vain, to procure him the Doctor of Medicine's degree from the University of Oxford. Lord Ashley successfully enlisted the good services of the Duke of Ormond, the Chancellor of the University; but on learning the opposition of Dean Fell and Dr. Allestree, Locke desired his patron to withdraw the application. Both now and on the former occasion, alluded to above (p. 16), the opposition was probably based on Locke's tendencies, known or suspected, to liberal views in religion; nor would the connexion with Lord Ashley be at all likely to mitigate the sternness of the college and university authorities. It had, of course, all along been open to him to proceed to the Doctor's degree in the ordinary way, by attending lectures and performing exercises; and whether he was prevented from doing so by the tediousness of the process, by the hope of attaining the degree through a shorter and easier method, or by a certain amount of indecision as to whether after all he would adopt the medical profession, we cannot say. Afterwards, we shall see, he proceeded to the degree of Bachelor of Medicine, but whether in the ordinary course, or by dispensation, is not known.

As connected with Locke's medical pursuits, I may here mention his friendship with Sydenham. We do not know when the acquaintance commenced, but Sydenham writing to Boyle, so early as April 2, 1668, speaks of "my friend Mr. Locke." That Sydenham entertained great respect for the medical skill and judgment of Locke—who appears to have accompanied him in his visits to his

patients, and, in turn, to have availed himself of Sydenham's assistance in attending the Ashley household—there can be no doubt. Writing to Mapletoft, their common friend, and a physician of some eminence, in 1676, he says : "You know how thoroughly my method [of curing fevers] is approved of by an intimate and common friend of ours, and one who has closely and exhaustively examined the subject—I mean Mr. John Locke, a man whom, in the acuteness of his intellect, in the steadiness of his judgment, and in the simplicity, that is, in the excellence, of his manners, I confidently declare to have amongst the men of our own time few equals and no superior." A number of notes and papers, still extant, attest the interest which Locke now took in medical studies, and the hopes with which he looked forward to improvements in medical practice. That the sympathy between him and Sydenham was very close, is evident from the writings of both.

But, meanwhile, he was also busy with other pursuits. One of these was the administration, under Ashley, and the other "lords proprietors," of the colony of Carolina. In 1663 this colony had been granted by Charles the Second to eight "lords proprietors," of whom Ashley was one. Locke, when he went to live in Ashley's family, appears to have become, though without any formal appointment, a sort of chief secretary and manager to the association. A vast amount of miscellaneous business seems to have been transacted by him in this capacity; but what to us would be most interesting, if we could determine it, would be the share he took in drawing up the document entitled, "The Fundamental Constitutions of Carolina," issued on the 1st of March, 1669-70. Many of the articles, embodying, as they do, a sort of modified feudalism, must have been distasteful to Locke, and it is

hardly possible to suppose that he was the originator of them. But perhaps we may trace his hand in the articles on religion, between which and his views, as stated in his unpublished papers written before and his published works written after this time, there is a large amount of correspondence. No man was to be permitted to be a freeman of Carolina unless he acknowledged a God, and agreed that God was to be publicly and solemnly worshipped. But within these limits any seven persons might constitute a church, provided that they upheld the duty of every man, if called on, to bear witness to the truth, and agreed on some external symbol by which such witness might be signified. Any one, however, who did not belong to some such communion was to be regarded as outside the protection of the law. The members of one church were not to molest or persecute those of another; and no man was to "use any reproachful, reviling, or abusive language against the religion of any church or profession, that being the certain way of disturbing the peace, and of hindering the conversion of any to the truth." Amongst the miscellaneous provisions in this code is one strictly forbidding any one to plead before a court of justice for money or reward; and another, enacting that "every freeman of Carolina shall have absolute power and authority over his negro slaves, of what opinion or religion soever."

In 1668 Locke was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society, and in 1669 and 1672 was placed on the Council, but he never appears to have taken much part in the proceedings of the society. On the other hand, there seem to have been certain less formal meetings of a few friends, constituting possibly a sort of club, in the discussions of which he took a more active share. It was at one of these meetings that the conversation took place which led to

Locke's writing his famous *Essay* (see page 127). According to a marginal note made by Sir James Tyrrell in his copy of the first edition, now in the British Museum, the discussion on this occasion turned on "the principles of morality and revealed religion." The date of this memorable meeting was, according to the same authority, the winter of 1673; but according to Lady Masham, it was 1670 or 1671. Anyway, there is an entry on the main subject of the *Essay* in Locke's Common-place Book, beginning "Sic cogitavit de intellectu humano Johannes Locke, anno 1671." In this brief entry the origin of all knowledge is referred to sense, and "sensible qualities" are stated to be "the simplest ideas we have and the first object of our understanding"—a theory which, as we shall hereafter see, was supplemented in the *Essay* by the addition to the ultimate sources of knowledge of simple ideas of reflection. The *Essay* itself was not published till nearly twenty years after this date, in 1690.

Locke's health had never been strong, and, in the years 1670-2 he seems to have suffered much from a troublesome cough, indicative of disease of the lungs. Connected with this illness was a short journey which he made in France, in the suite of the Countess of Northumberland, in the autumn of 1672. Soon after his return, his patron, who had lately been created Earl of Shaftesbury, was appointed to the highest office of the State, the Lord High Chancellorship of England. Locke shared in his good fortune, and was made Secretary of Presentations—that is, of the Chancellor's church patronage—with a salary of 300*l.* a year. The modern reader, especially when he recollects Locke's intimacy with Shaftesbury, is surprised to find that he dined at the Steward's table, that he was expected to attend prayers three times a day, and that,

when the Chancellor drove out in state, he was accustomed, with the other secretaries, to walk by the side of the coach, while, as "my lord" got in and out, he "went before him bareheaded." The distinctions of rank were, however, far more marked in those days than at present, and the high officers of state were still surrounded with much of the elaborate ceremonial which had obtained in the times of the Tudors.

To the period of Locke's excursion in France, or that immediately succeeding it, we may refer a free translation —or rather, adaptation—of three of the *Essais de Morale* of Pierre Nicole, a well-known Jansenist, and the friend of Pascal and Arnauld. These *Essays*, which were translated for the use of the Countess of Shaftesbury, were apparently not designed for publication, and, in fact, were first given to the world by Dr. Hancock, in 1828. They are mainly remarkable as affording evidence of the depth and sincerity of Locke's religious convictions.

Routine and official duties now occupied much of his time, and must have interfered sadly with his favourite studies. From discussing the tangled and ambiguous politics of this period I purposely refrain; but there is one official act, recorded of Locke at this time, which places him in so incongruous a light that his biographer can hardly pass it over in silence. At the opening of the Parliament which met on February 4, 1672-3, Shaftesbury, amplifying the King's Speech, made, though it is said unwillingly and with much concern, his famous defence of the Dutch war, and his attack on the Dutch nation, culminating in the words "Delenda est Carthago." Locke, we are sorry to find, though the act was a purely ministerial one, stood at his elbow with a written copy, to prompt him in case of failure.

On the 9th of November, 1673, Shaftesbury, who had incurred the displeasure of the King by his support of the Test Bill, and who was now looked on as one of the principal leaders of the Anti-Catholic party, was summarily dismissed from the Chancellorship. Locke, of course, lost at the same time the Secretaryship of Presentations; but he did not, as meaner men might have done, try to insinuate himself into wealth and power through other avenues. "When my grandfather," says the third Earl of Shaftesbury, "quitted the Court and began to be in danger from it, Mr. Locke now shared with him in dangers, as before in honours and advantages. He entrusted him with his secretest negotiations, and made use of his assistant pen in matters that nearly concerned the State and were fit to be made public."

Locke's connexion with the affairs of the colony of Carolina has already been mentioned. Business of this kind, owing to his relations with Shaftesbury, multiplied upon him, and on the 15th of October, 1673, shortly before Shaftesbury's fall, he was sworn in as Secretary to the Council of Trade and Foreign Plantations, with a salary of 500*l.* a year. This office he retained, notwithstanding the fall of his patron, till the dissolution of the Council on the 12th of March, 1674-5; but it appears that his salary was never paid.

On February 6, 1674-5, Locke proceeded to the degree of Bachelor of Medicine, having already been appointed to, or more probably promised, a Faculty Studentship at Ch. Ch., or, as Dean Prideaux, who had no love for him, puts it, "having wriggled into Ireland's faculty place." It is curious that his name does not appear in the Ch. Ch. books among the Faculty Students till the second quarter of 1675, and during that and the two subsequent

quarters it is erased. The first time the name occurs without an erasure is in the first quarter of 1676. That there was much irregularity in the mode of appointing to College places at this time is evident.

His studentship being now secure, Lord Shaftesbury having, for a consideration in ready money, granted him an annuity of 100*l.* a year, and his estates in Somersetshire, as well as one or two loans and mortgages, bringing him in a modest sum in addition, Locke, notwithstanding the non-payment of his salary as Secretary to the Council of Trade and Plantations, must have been in fairly comfortable circumstances. He was dispensed from the necessity of practising a profession, and, being also relieved from the pressure of public affairs, was free to follow his bent. It is probably to the leisure almost enforced upon him by the weakness of his health as well as by the turn which public affairs had taken, and rendered possible by the independence of his position, that we are indebted for the maturity of reflection which forms so characteristic a feature of his subsequent writings.

CHAPTER III.

RESIDENCE IN FRANCE — FURTHER RELATIONS WITH SHAFTESBURY — EXPULSION FROM CHRIST CHURCH.

THE state of Locke's health had long rendered it desirable that he should reside in a warmer climate, and his release from official duties now removed any obstacle that there might formerly have been to his absence from England. The place which he selected for his retirement was Montpellier, at that time the most usual place of resort for invalids who were able to leave their own country. He left London about the middle of November, 1675, with one if not more companions, and, after experiencing the ordinary inconveniences of travel in those days of slow locomotion and poor inns, arrived at Paris on Nov. 24, and at Lyons on Dec. 11. At Lyons, he remarks of the library at the Jesuits' College that it "is the best that ever I saw, except Oxford, being one very high oblong square, with a gallery round, to come at the books." As before, in the North of Germany, so now in the South of France, he is a diligent observer of everything of interest, whether in the way of customs, occupations, or buildings, that falls in his way. He reached Montpellier on Christmas Day, and, except when making short excursions in the neighbourhood, resided there continuously till the early spring of 1677, a period of fourteen months. At

Montpellier I have not been able to find any trace of him, either in the library or elsewhere, but his journal shows that he was much interested in the trade and products of the country, as well as in the objects which usually excite the curiosity of travellers. At Shaftesbury's instigation he wrote a little treatise, entitled, "Observations upon the Growth and Culture of Vines and Olives, the Production of Silk, and the Preservation of Fruits." It is curious that this small tract was never published till 1766. It enumerates no less than forty-one varieties of grapes, and thirteen varieties of olives, which were grown in the neighbourhood of Montpellier. The ceremonial and doings of the States of Languedoc attracted Locke's attention, but he does not seem to have been present at their deliberations. He witnessed, however, their devotions at the Church of Notre Dame, and remarks that the Cardinal Archbishop of Narbonne, who took part in the offices, kept "talking every now and then, and laughing with the bishops next him." The increasing incidence of the taxation on the lower and middle orders, and the growing poverty of the people, were topics which could hardly fail to arrest the attention of any intelligent traveller at that time. "The rent of lands in France is fallen one half in these few years, by reason of the poverty of the people. Merchants and handicraftsmen pay near half their gains." Among the more interesting entries in his journal are the following:—March 18th (N.S.). "Monsieur Rennaie, a gentleman of the town, in whose house Sir J. Rushworth lay, about four years ago, sacrificed a child to the devil—a child of a servant of his own, upon a design to get the devil to be his friend and help him to get some money. Several murders committed here since I came, and more attempted; one by a brother

on his sister, in the house where I lay." March 22nd (N.S.): "The new philosophy of Des Cartes prohibited to be taught in universities, schools, and academies." It is plain from the journal that Locke's mind was now busy with the class of questions which were afterwards treated in the Essay; reflections on space, the extent of possible knowledge, the objects and modes of study, &c., being curiously interspersed with his notes of travel. In respect of health, he does not seem to have benefited much by his stay at Montpellier, which, as before stated, he left in the early spring of 1677. By slow stages he travelled to Paris, where he joined a pupil, the son of Sir John Banks, who had been commended to his supervision by Shaftesbury. This tutorial engagement lasted for nearly two years, and, in consequence of it, Locke remained in France longer than he had originally intended. In a letter written to his old friend Mapletoft from Paris in June, 1677, after some playful allusions to Mapletoft's love affairs, he says:—"My health is the only mistress I have a long time courted, and is so coy a one that I think it will take up the remainder of my days to obtain her good graces and keep her in good humour." There can be no question that, at this time, the state of his health was a matter of very serious concern to him, and it may possibly have been the cause of his not marrying. While in Paris he probably took a pretty complete holiday, seeing the sights, however, making occasional excursions, forming new acquaintances, and exercising a general supervision over the education of his young charge.

At the end of June, 1678, Locke, accompanied probably by his pupil, left Paris with the view of making his way leisurely to Montpellier, and thence to Rome. He travelled westward by way of Orleans, Blois, and Angers.

On the banks of the Loire he noticed the poverty-stricken appearance of the country. "Many of the towns they call bourgs; but, considering how poor and few the houses in most of them are, would in England scarce amount to villages. The houses generally were but one story. . . . The gentlemen's seats, of which we saw many, were most of them rather bearing marks of decay than of thriving and being well kept." Montpellier was reached early in October, and, after a short stay there, he went on to Lyons, with the view of commencing his journey to Rome. But the depth of the snow on Mont Cenis was fatal to this design. Twice Locke had formed plans to visit Rome, "the time set, the company agreed," and both times he had been disappointed. "Were I not accustomed," he says, "to have fortune to dispose of me contrary to my design and expectation, I should be very angry to be thus turned out of my way, when I made sure in a few days to mount the Capitol and trace the footsteps of the Scipios and the Cæsars." He had now nothing left but to turn back to Paris, where he remained till the following April. Here he seems to have spent his time in the same miscellaneous occupations as before. In the journal we find the following entry, dated Feb. 13:— "I saw the library of M. de Thou, a great collection of choice, well-bound books, which are now to be sold; amongst others, a Greek manuscript, written by one Angelot, by which Stephens' Greek characters were first made." De Thou, the celebrated historian of his own times, is better known under his Latinized name, Thuanus. On a Friday, he notes:—"The observation of Lent at Paris is come almost to nothing. Meat is openly to be had in the shambles, and a dispensation commonly to be had from the curate without difficulty. People of sense

laugh at it, and in Italy itself, for twenty sous, a dispensation is certainly to be had." Then follows an amusing story of "that Bishop of Bellay, who has writ so much against monks and monkery."

"A devout lady being sick, and besieged by the Carmes, made her will and gave them all: the Bishop of Bellay coming to see her, after it was done, asked whether she had made her will; she answered yes, and told him how; he convinced her it was not well, and she, desiring to alter it, found a difficulty how to do it, being so beset by the friars. The bishop bid her not trouble herself for it, but presently took order that two notaries, habited as physicians, should come to her, who being by her bedside, the bishop told the company it was convenient all should withdraw; and so the former will was revoked, and a new one made and put into the bishop's hands. The lady dies, the Carmes produce their will, and for some time the bishop lets them enjoy the pleasure of their inheritance; but at last, taking out the other will, he says to them, 'Mes frères, you are the sons of Elijah, children of the Old Testament, and have no share in the New.'"

It may have been the influence of fashion and the eager thirst for reputation, which were so rife in Parisian society, that inspired, shortly after Locke's return to Paris, the following reflections, as profound as they are true:—

"The principal spring from which the actions of men take their rise, the rule they conduct them by, and the end to which they direct them, seems to be credit and reputation, and that which, at any rate, they avoid is in the greatest part shame and disgrace. This makes the Hurons and other people of Canada with such constancy endure inexpressible torments; this makes merchants in one country and soldiers in another; this puts men upon school divinity in one country and physics and mathematics in another; this cuts out the dresses for the women, and

makes the fashions for the men, and makes them endure the inconveniences of all. Religions are upheld by this and factions maintained, and the shame of being disesteemed by those with whom one hath lived, and to whom one would recommend oneself, is the great source and director of most of the actions of men. . . . He therefore that would govern the world well, had need consider rather what fashions he makes than what laws; and to bring anything into use he need only give it reputation."

Leaving Paris on the 22nd of April, 1679, Locke arrived, after his long absence, in London on the 30th of the same month. In the political world, much had happened whilst he had been away. Shaftesbury, already in disgrace when he left England, had been imprisoned in the Tower for a year; but, by a sudden turn of fortune, was now reinstated in office as President of the newly-created Council. Of the circumstances which had brought about this change, the story of the Popish Plot, the discovery of the King's nefarious negotiations with Louis XIV., and the impeachment of Danby, it is not necessary here to speak. That Shaftesbury, when he saw the prospect of restoration to power, should wish to avail himself, as before, of Locke's advice and services, was only to be expected, and it was the expression of this desire which had hastened Locke's return to England. What, however, were the exact relations between the new Lord President and his former secretary during Shaftesbury's second tenure of office we are not informed. That the intercourse between them was close and frequent, there can be no doubt, and, during the summer months of 1679, Locke again resided in his patron's house. But the king soon felt himself strong enough to reassert his own will. Under date of the 15th of October, we

read in the Privy Council Book, "The Earl of Shaftesbury's name was struck out of this list by his Majesty's command in Council." Consequently, Shaftesbury was again in opposition, and Locke, though still his adviser and friend, and frequently an inmate of one or other of his houses, was released from the pressure of official business. One of his principal cares at this time was the supervision of the education of Shaftesbury's grandson. The father, Locke's former pupil, "born a shapeless lump, like anarchy," seems to have been but a poor creature, and the little Anthony, when only three years old, was made over to the formal guardianship of his grandfather. Locke, though not his instructor, seems to have kept a vigilant eye on the boy's studies and discipline, as well as on his health and bodily training. If we may trust the memory of the third earl, writing when in middle life, Locke's care was extended to his brothers and sisters as well as to himself. "In our education," he says, "Mr. Locke governed according to his own principles, since published by him" [in the *Thoughts on Education*], "and with such success that we all of us came to full years with strong and healthy constitutions—my own the worst, though never faulty till of late. I was his more peculiar charge, being, as eldest son, taken by my grandfather and bred under his immediate care, Mr. Locke having the absolute direction of my education, and to whom, next my immediate parents, as I must own the greatest obligation, so I have ever preserved the highest gratitude and duty." The admiration and gratitude which the author of the *Characteristics* felt for his tutor did not, however, prevent him from criticizing freely Locke's *Theory of Ethics*, and pronouncing it "a very poor philosophy." Of the *Essay*, as a whole, notwithstanding his vigorous protest on this par-

ticular point, Shaftesbury seems to have had as high an opinion as of its author. "It may as well qualify for business and the world as for the sciences and a university. No one has done more towards the recalling of philosophy from barbarity into use and practice of the world, and into the company of the better and politer sort, who might well be ashamed of it in its other dress. No one has opened a better or clearer way to reasoning." (See the Letters of the third Earl of Shaftesbury to a Student at the University, Letters I., VIII.)

Of the parliament which met at Oxford on the 21st of March, 1680-1, Locke was a close, and must have been an anxious, observer. He himself occupied his rooms at Christ Church, and for Shaftesbury's use he obtained the house of the celebrated mathematician, Dr. Wallis. The fullest account we have of the earlier proceedings of this parliament are contained in a letter from Locke to Stringer, Shaftesbury's Secretary. It was prematurely dissolved on the 28th of March, Charles having succeeded in obtaining supplies from the French king instead of from his own subjects, and no other parliament was summoned during the remainder of the reign.

So suspicious of treachery had the rival parties in the State now become, that most of the members of the Oxford parliament had been attended by armed servants, while the king was protected by a body of guards. The political tension was, of course, by no means relaxed, when it became plain that the king intended to govern without a parliament, and we can hardly feel surprised that ministers took the initiative in trying to silence their opponents. On the 2nd of July, 1681, Shaftesbury was arrested in his London house on a charge of high treason, and, after a brief examination before the Council, was

committed to the tower. Notwithstanding many attempts, he failed to obtain a trial till Nov. 24, when he was indicted before a special commission at the Old Bailey. The grand jury, amidst the plaudits of the spectators, threw out the bill, and on the 1st of December following he was released on bail. Shaftesbury's acquittal was received in London, and throughout the country, with acclamations of joy, but his triumph was only a brief one. The rest of his story is soon told. In the summer of 1682, Shaftesbury, Monmouth, Russell, and a few others, began to concert measures for a general rising against the king. The scheme was, of course, discovered, and Shaftesbury, knowing that, from the new composition of the juries, he would have no chance of escape if another indictment were preferred against him, took to flight, and concealed himself for some weeks in obscure houses in the city and in Wapping. Meanwhile he tried, from his hiding-places, to foment an insurrection, but, when he found that the day which had been fixed on for the general rising had been postponed, he determined to seek safety for himself by escaping to Holland. After some adventures on the way, he reached Amsterdam in the beginning of December. To preserve him from extradition, he was on his petition admitted a citizen of Amsterdam, and might thus, like Locke, have lived to see the Revolution, but on the 21st of January, 1682-3, he died, in excruciating agonies, of gout in the stomach.

There is no evidence to implicate Locke in Shaftesbury's design of setting the Duke of Monmouth on the throne, though it is difficult to suppose that he was not acquainted with it. Any way, in the spring of 1681-2, he seems to have been engaged in some mysterious political movements, the nature of which is unknown to us. Humphrey

Prideaux, afterwards Dean of Norwich, in his gossiping letters to John Ellis, afterwards an Under-Secretary of State, frequently mentions Locke, who was at this time residing in Oxford. These notices were probably in answer to queries from Ellis, who was already in the employment of the government. From Prideaux's letters (recently published by the Camden Society) I extract a few passages, interesting not only as throwing light on Locke's mode of life at this period in Oxford, but also as showing the estimate of him formed by a political enemy who was a member of the same college :—

"*March* 14, 1681 (o.s.).—John Locke lives a very cunning and unintelligible life here, being two days in town and three out; and no one knows where he goes, or when he goes, or when he returns. Certainly there is some Whig intrigue a managing; but here not a word of politics comes from him, nothing of news or anything else concerning our present affairs, as if he were not at all concerned in them.

"*March* 19, 1681 (o.s.).—Where J. L. goes I cannot by any means learn, all his voyages being so cunningly contrived. He hath in his last sally been absent at least ten days, where I cannot learn. Last night he returned; and sometimes he himself goes out and leaves his man behind, who shall then to be often seen in the quadrangle to make people believe his master is at home, for he will let no one come to his chamber, and therefore it is not certain when he is there or when he is absent. I fancy there are projects afoot.

"*October* 24, 1682.—John Locke lives very quietly with us, and not a word ever drops from his mouth that discovers anything of his heart within. Now his master is fled, I suppose we shall have him altogether. He seems to be a man of very good converse, and that we have of him with content; as for what else he is he keeps it to himself, and therefore troubles not us with it nor we him."

After Shaftesbury's dismissal from the Presidentship of

the Council, Locke must have had a considerable amount of leisure. The state of his health, however, and the consequent necessity of his frequently changing his residence, must have interfered a good deal with the progress of his studies. It is plain from his correspondence that he still took a lively interest in scientific and medical pursuits, nor does he appear to have yet given up the hope of practising medicine in a regular way. By his friends he was usually called Dr. Locke, and at the period of life we are now considering he still continued to attend cases, and to make elaborate notes of treatment and diagnosis.

It is probable that about this time Locke wrote the first of the *Two Treatises on Government*, which were published in 1690. Materials for the Essay were, undoubtedly, being slowly accumulated, and on a variety of questions, political, educational, ethical, theological, and philosophical, his views were being gradually matured. Several pamphlets of a political character were, during these years, attributed to him, but we have his own solemn asseveration, in a letter written to the Earl of Pembroke in November, 1684, that he was not the author "of any pamphlet or treatise whatever, in part good, bad, or indifferent;" that is, of course, of any published pamphlet or treatise, for he had already written a good deal in the way of essays, reflections, and commonplaces.

After Shaftesbury's flight, Locke must have found his position becoming more and more unpleasant. During the year 1682 he had resided pretty constantly in Oxford, but we can well understand that Oxford was not then a very eligible place of residence for a whig and a latitudinarian. He appears to have left it for good at the end of June or beginning of July, 1683, and to have retired for a while

into Somersetshire. Shortly afterwards, however, he quitted England altogether, and when we next hear of him it is in Holland. That he was implicated in the Rye House plot is, on every ground, most improbable, notwithstanding the malicious insinuations of Prideaux to the contrary. Nor is there any evidence that he had any concern with the more respectable conspiracy of Monmouth, Russell, and Sidney. But in those times of plots and counter-plots, and arbitrary interference with the courts of justice, any man who was in opposition to the government might well be in fear for his life or liberty. Specially would this be the case with Locke, who was well known as a friend and adherent of Shaftesbury. Moreover, had he been thrown into prison, the state of his health was such that his life would probably have been endangered. His flight, therefore, affords no countenance whatsoever to the supposition that he had been engaged in treasonable designs against the government. It would, I conceive, be no stain on Locke's character, had he, in those days of misgovernment and oppression, conspired to effect by violent means a change in the succession, or even a transference of the crown. But the fact that there is no evidence of his having done so removes almost all excuse for the tyrannical act which I am presently about to describe. In connexion with Locke's flight to Holland, it may be mentioned that the idea of leaving England was by no means new to him. The proposal to emigrate together to Carolina or the Île de Bourbon, possibly, however, thrown out half in jest, is a frequent topic in the correspondence with his French friend, Thoynard, during the two or three years succeeding his return from France. That he was becoming disgusted with the political game then being played in

England, and despondent as to the future of his country, is evident from several letters written by him at this time.

The account of Locke's life in Holland may be deferred to the next chapter. It will be convenient here to tell the story of his expulsion from Christ Church, which marks the issue of his connexion with Shaftesbury, and of the part which he had so far taken in English politics. We have already seen that he was suspected of having written a number of political pamphlets against the government. This suspicion was not unnatural, Locke being a literary man and a well-known friend of Shaftesbury. After his retirement to Holland, the suspicion of his having written various pamphlets, supposed to have been printed in that country and surreptitiously conveyed into England, was one which very naturally occurred, and, according to Prideaux, he was now specially suspected of having written "a most bitter libel, published in Holland in English, Dutch, and French, called a Hue and Cry after the Earl of Essex's murder." But the government had no proof of these surmises, and therefore no right to take action upon them. Their suspicions were, however, probably sharpened by the malicious reports of their spies in Oxford, and by the not unlikely supposition that Locke was taking part in the intrigues, on behalf of Monmouth, now being carried on in Holland. For the latter suspicion, as for the one with regard to the authorship of the pamphlets, it happens that there was no justification, but it is impossible to deny that there was some *primâ facie* ground for it. Compared with other arbitrary acts of the reigns of Charles II. and James II., the measures taken against Locke do not seem exceptionally severe, utterly abhorrent as they would doubtless be to the usages of a constitutional age.

About fourteen or fifteen months had elapsed since his disappearance from England, when, on the 6th of November, 1684, Lord Sunderland signified to Dr. Fell, Dean of Christ Church, who was also Bishop of Oxford, the pleasure of the king that Locke should be removed from his studentship, asking the Dean at the same time to specify "the method of doing it." "The method" adopted by the Dean was to attach a "moneo" to the screen in the college hall, summoning Locke to appear on the 1st of January following, to answer the charges against him. After admitting that Locke, as having a physician's place among the students, was not obliged to residence, and that he was abroad upon want of health, the Dean, in his reply to Sunderland, proceeds to show his readiness to accommodate himself to the requirements of the court: "Notwithstanding that, I have summoned him to return home, which is done with this prospect, that if he comes not back, he will be liable to expulsion for contumacy; if he does, he will be answerable to your lordship for what he shall be found to have done amiss." Ingenious, however, as the "method" was, it was not expeditious enough to satisfy the court. A second letter from Sunderland, enjoining Locke's immediate expulsion, was at once despatched. This curious document is still shown in the Christ Church library, and, as I have never seen an exact transcript of it, I here subjoin one :—

"To the Right Reverend Father in God, John, Lord Bishop of Oxon, Dean of Christ-Church, and our trusty and well-beloved the Chapter there.

"Right Reverend Father in God, and trusty and well-beloved, we greet you well. Whereas we have received information of the factious and disloyall behaviour of Lock, one of the students of that our Colledge; we have thought fit hereby to

signify our will and pleasure to you, that you forthwith remove him from his said student's place, and deprive him of all the rights and advantages thereunto belonging. For which this shall be your warrant. And so we bid you heartily farewell.

"Given at our Court at Whitehall, 11th day of November, 1684, in the six and thirtieth year of our Reigne.

"By his Majesty's command,

"SUNDERLAND."

On the 16th of November the Dean signified that his Majesty's command was fully executed, whereupon Lord Sunderland acquainted him that his Majesty was well satisfied with the college's ready obedience.

Thus the most celebrated man, perhaps, that Oxford has sheltered within her walls since the Reformation was summarily ejected at the dictation of a corrupt and arbitrary court. The Dean and Chapter might have won our admiration, had they resisted the royal command, as was done in the next reign by the Fellows of Magdalen College, but it was hardly to be expected that they should risk their own goods and liberties in attempting to afford a protection which, after all, would have been almost certainly attempted in vain. Moreover, as Lord Grenville (*Oxford and Locke*) has pointed out, Christ Church being a royal foundation, the Dean and Chapter might well regard the king as having full power either to appoint or remove any member of the foundation, and themselves as only registering his decree. The same power, as we have already seen, had been exercised in Locke's favour by the dispensation from entering holy orders accorded by the crown in 1666.

After the Revolution, Locke petitioned William the Third for the restitution of his studentship, but "finding," according to Lady Masham, that "it would give

great disturbance to the society, and dispossess the person that was in his place, he desisted from that pretension."

In Fell's first letter to Sunderland, he speaks of Locke's extreme reserve and taciturnity. As this seems to have been one of his distinguishing characteristics, and as the passage is otherwise remarkable, as showing the vigilance with which Locke was watched at Oxford, I give it at length :—

"I have for divers years had an eye upon him; but so close has his guard been on himself that, after several strict inquiries, I may confidently affirm there is not any one in the College, however familiar with him, who has heard him speak a word either against or so much as concerning the Government; and although very frequently, both in public and in private, discourses have been purposely introduced to the disparagement of his master, the Earl of Shaftesbury, his party and designs, he could never be provoked to take any notice or discover in word or look the least concern; so that I believe there is not in the world such a master of taciturnity and passion."

This account of Locke's reserve, as well as the illustration here incidentally afforded of the abominable system of college espionage which then prevailed in Oxford, is amply confirmed by Prideaux's letters to Ellis. In the *Thoughts on Education* parents and tutors are recommended to mould children betimes to this mastery over their tongues. But the gift of silence was exercised by Locke only in those matters where other men have no right to be inquisitive or curious—matters of private concernment and of individual opinion. In conversation on general topics, he seems always to have been open and copious. His taciturnity, though the effect of prudence and self-control, was certainly not due to any lack of geniality or any want of sympathy with others.

CHAPTER IV.

RESIDENCE IN HOLLAND—THE REVOLUTION—RETURN TO ENGLAND—PUBLICATION OF THE "ESSAY" AND OTHER WORKS.

Locke must have landed in Holland in one of the autumn months of 1683, being then about fifty-one years of age. We are not able, however, to trace any of his movements till the January of 1683-4, when he was present, by invitation of Peter Guenellon, the principal physician of Amsterdam, at the dissection of a lioness which had been killed by the intense cold of the winter.

Through Guenellon, whom he had met during his stay in Paris, he must have made the acquaintance of the principal literary and scientific men at that time residing in or near Amsterdam. Amongst these was Philip van Limborch, then professor of theology among the Arminians or Remonstrants. The Arminians (called Remonstrants on account of the remonstrance which they had presented to the States-General in 1610) were the latitudinarians of Holland, and, though they had been condemned by the Synod of Dort in 1619, and had been subjected to a bitter persecution by the Calvinist clergy for some years following, were now a fairly numerous body, possessing a theological seminary, and exercising a considerable influence, not only in their own country, but over the minds

of the more liberal theologians throughout Europe. The undogmatic, tolerant, and, if I may use the expression, ethical character of the Remonstrant theology must have had great attractions for Locke, and he and Limborch, united by many common sentiments, subsequently became fast friends.

In the autumn of 1684 Locke made a tour of the country, noting, as was usual with him, all objects and matters of interest, and evidently benefiting much in health by the diversion of travelling. Indeed, we are somewhat surprised to hear that his health derived more advantage from the air of Holland than from that of Montpellier. What, however, he put down to climate was, perhaps, at least equally due to pleasant companionship, and to the variety of interests—political, commercial, literary, and theological—which the Dutch nation at that time so pre-eminently afforded. Amongst the objects which attracted his attention was a sect of communistic mystics established near Leeuwarden. "They receive," he says, "all ages, sexes, and degrees, upon approbation. They live all in common; and whoever is admitted is to give with himself all he has to Christ the Lord—that is, the Church—to be managed by officers appointed by the Church. These people, however, were very shy to give an account of themselves to strangers, and they appeared inclined to dispense their instruction only to those whom 'the Lord,' as they say, 'had disposed to it,' and in whom they saw 'signs of grace;' which 'signs of grace' seem to me to be, at last, a perfect submission to the will and rules of their pastor, Mr. Yonn, who, if I mistake not, has established to himself a perfect empire over them. For though their censures and all their administrations be in appearance in their Church,

yet it is easy to perceive how at last it determines in him. He is *dominus factotum*; and though I believe they are, generally speaking, people of very good and exemplary lives, yet the tone of voice, manner, and fashion of those I conversed with seemed to make one suspect a little of Tartuffe." After Locke's experiences of the Puritan ministers in his early life, the character of Mr. Yonn was, probably, by no means new to him, though he now repeated his acquaintance with it under novel circumstances.

In November Locke was again in Amsterdam, and here he heard of Dr. Fell's "moneo," summoning him back to Christ Church. At first it would seem that he resolved to comply with it, but the intelligence of the "moneo" must soon have been followed by that of his deprivation, and thus he was saved from the dangers which might have befallen him had he returned to England. In more ways than one, his continued absence abroad was probably an advantage to him. "In Holland," says Lady Masham, "he had full leisure to prosecute his thoughts on the subject of *Human Understanding*—a work which, in probability, he never would have finished had he continued in England." The winter of this year was spent in Utrecht and devoted to study—probably to the preparation of the *Essay on Human Understanding*. But this quiet mode of life was quickly coming to an end. On the 6th of February, 1684-5, Charles the Second had died; and, though the succession of the Duke of York was at first undisputed, Monmouth, the natural son of the late king, was soon persuaded by his impatient and injudicious followers to head the insurrection which resulted in his defeat and execution. From Monmouth's intrigues Locke had always held aloof, "having no such high opinion of

the Duke of Monmouth as to expect anything from his undertaking." But prudence, in those days of fierce political hatred and unblushing fabrications, was often of very little avail. Locke was well known as an adherent of Shaftesbury, and Shaftesbury had long and ardently favoured Monmouth's pretensions. Moreover, stories tending to discredit him with the advisers of the Court, and to connect his name with the plots of the other exiles, were probably circulating pretty freely at this time. On the 7th of May—a few days after Argyle had set out on his ill-starred expedition to Scotland, and while Monmouth was still preparing for his descent on the west coast of England—Colonel Skelton, who had been sent over as a special envoy to the Hague, presented to the States-General a list of persons regarded as dangerous by the English Government, and demanded their surrender. On this list Locke's name stood last, having been added, we are told, by Sir George Downing, the English representative at the Dutch Court, but whether or not in pursuance of further instructions from home we do not know. Locke was at this time living at Utrecht, and it was at once arranged that he should be concealed in the house of Dr. Veen of Amsterdam, the father-in-law of his old acquaintance, Dr. Guenellon. Though it was necessary, for appearance' sake, that he should keep strictly to his hiding-place, he does not seem to have incurred any real danger. The municipal authorities of Amsterdam had too great a horror of Popery and too much sympathy with liberty to show any marked zeal in carrying out the wishes of the English king; nor does the Prince of Orange himself appear to have been very eager to hunt out the fugitives, provided they went through the decent ceremony of concealing themselves from the ministers of justice. To

Locke the confinement was doubtless irksome; but he was solaced by the visits of his friends, especially of Limborch, and the monotony of his solitude was broken by a visit of a few weeks to Cleve. Here, however, he does not appear to have felt so safe as at Amsterdam; and, consequently, he soon returned to his old quarters, assuming the name of Dr. Van der Linden, as at Cleve he had assumed that of Lamy. Meanwhile, two of his friends in England—William Penn, the celebrated Quaker, and the Earl of Pembroke, to whom he afterwards dedicated the *Essay*—were moving the king for a pardon. The latter, writing to Locke on the 20th of August, informs him that the king "bid me write to you to come over; I told him I would then bring you to kiss his hand, and he was fully satisfied I should." Locke, however, appears to have had little confidence in the king's sincerity, and, perhaps, no desire to compromise any political action that might be open to him in the future by making formal submission to a monarch who was tolerably certain to work out his own ruin. He still remained in concealment, and replied that, "having been guilty of no crime, he had no occasion for a pardon." But in May, 1686, all fear of arrest was removed by the appearance of a new proclamation of the States-General, in which his name was not included, and henceforth he was enabled to move about with perfect freedom.

The name of Limborch, one of the friends whom Locke made in Holland, has already been mentioned. A long series of letters which passed between them, beginning with Locke's arrival at Cleve in September, 1685, and ending only a few weeks before his death, is still extant, though some are still unpublished. This correspondence is interesting, not only as throwing light on Locke's pur-

suits, but also as affording a free expression of his theological opinions. Thus, in a letter written to Limborch soon after his arrival at Cleve, with reference to a work recently published by Le Clerc, he acknowledges his perplexities respecting the plenary inspiration of the Bible. "If all things which are contained in the sacred books are equally to be regarded as inspired, without any distinctions, then we give philosophers a great handle for doubting of our faith and sincerity. If, on the contrary, some things are to be regarded as purely human, how shall we establish the divine authority of the Scriptures, without which the Christian religion will fall to the ground? What shall be our criterion? Where shall we draw the line?" He applies to Limborch for help. "For many things which occur in the canonical books, long before I read this treatise, have made me anxious and doubtful, and I shall be most grateful if you could remove my scruples." From the character of his theological writings, composed during the latter years of his life, it would appear that these scruples were afterwards either removed or set aside.

With Le Clerc (Joannes Clericus) himself Locke first became personally acquainted after his return to Amsterdam in the winter of 1685-6. Le Clerc was still young, having been born at Geneva in 1657, but he had already acquired considerable reputation both as a philosopher and as a theologian. As a philosopher, he had at first embraced the doctrines of Descartes, but, in after-life, he leaned rather to those views which, a few years after the time of which I am writing, became famous by the publication of Locke's *Essay*. As a divine, his theology was liberal and critical beyond even that of the Remonstrant School. He questioned the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, regarded some of the books of the Old Testa-

ment as of purely human origin, and, in his treatment of the miracles and of Christian doctrine, rationalized so far as to expose himself to the charge of Socinianism, though he himself warmly repudiated the imputation. In literary activity and enterprise, he yielded to no other author of the age. Such a man, full of energy and of novel views, ready to entertain and discuss any question of interest in theology, criticism, or philosophy, must have been peculiarly acceptable to an exile like Locke, whose mind was now engaged with just the same problems that were occupying Le Clerc. The intimacy between the two students, though never so affectionate as that between Locke and Limborch, soon became a close one. Though widely separated in age, and though differing, probably, in many of their specific opinions, they were conscious that they were travelling the same road; a way then little frequented; the way which led from the received tenets of the churches and the schools to the arena of free inquiry and impartial investigation.

In the winter of 1685-6, Locke, while still hiding in Dr. Veen's house, employed himself in writing the famous *Epistola de Tolerantia*, addressed to Limborch. This tract was not, however, published till 1689, when it was almost immediately translated into English, Dutch, and French. Of the opinions expressed in this and the other letters on Toleration I shall have occasion to speak hereafter, when describing Locke's theological views. It must be recollected that, though now in his fifty-fourth year, he had as yet published nothing of any importance. He had indeed for several years been slowly putting together the materials for many books; but it is possible that his natural modesty, together with what seems to have been an excessive prudence, might have prevented him from giving

any of his thoughts to the world, at least during his lifetime, had it not been for the fortunate circumstances which brought him into contact with Le Clerc. At the time when the two friends were introduced to one another, Le Clerc was projecting the *Bibliothèque Universelle*, one of the earliest literary and scientific reviews, and to this Locke soon became a constant contributor. In the July number of 1686 appears his method of a Common-place Book, under the title, *Méthode Nouvelle de dresser des Recueils*. The ice was now broken, and from this time onwards we shall find his publications follow one another in rapid succession.

In September, 1686, Locke moved again to Utrecht, intending, apparently, to make a prolonged residence there; but in December, for some mysterious reason with which we are not acquainted, though connected in all probability with English politics, he was threatened with expulsion from the city, and was obliged to return to Amsterdam. It seems, from his correspondence with Limborch, that he did not wish this expulsion to be talked about. At the same time, he accepted stoically the inconveniences to which it put him. "These are the sports of fortune, or rather the ordinary chances of human life, which come as naturally as wind and rain to travellers." At Amsterdam he remained for two months as the guest of his old friend, Dr. Guenellon, and then removed to Rotterdam, where, with occasional breaks, he resided during the rest of his stay in Holland. This removal was undoubtedly connected with the turn which English politics were now taking at the Dutch Court. Monmouth being now out of the way, the only quarter to which those who were weary of the Stuart despotism could look for redress was the House of Orange. Secret negotiations were at this time

going on with the Prince and Princess, and there can be no doubt that Locke was taking an active share in the schemes that were in preparation. Rotterdam was within a short distance of the Hague, and also a convenient place for carrying on a correspondence with England as well as for meeting the Englishmen who landed in Holland. As soon as Locke arrived at Rotterdam his hands seem to have been tolerably full of political business. Writing to Limborch in February, 1686-7, he says, "To politics I gave but little thought at Amsterdam; here I cannot pay much attention to literature." Mr. Fox Bourne conjectures that it was through Lord Mordaunt, afterwards Earl of Peterborough, who shortly before this time had taken up his residence in Holland, that Locke was brought into personal relations with the Prince and Princess. Any way, these relations gradually ripened into friendship, and a mutual feeling of respect and admiration seems soon to have grown up between him and the royal couple.

While at Rotterdam, Locke resided with Benjamin Furly, an English Quaker, who was a merchant of considerable wealth and a great book-collector. At Furly's death in 1714, the sale-catalogue of his books occupied nearly 400 pages. Locke was thus at no loss for the instruments of his trade, and, notwithstanding his preoccupation in politics, he seems to have been working with fair assiduity at the *Essay* and on other literary subjects. In the number of the *Bibliothèque Universelle* for January, 1687-8, appeared an abstract of the *Essay*, translated into French by Le Clerc, from a manuscript written by Locke, which is still extant. The epitome was announced as communicated by Monsieur Locke, and a note was appended inviting criticisms, if anything false, obscure,

of defective were remarked in the system. After the review had appeared, separate copies of the epitome were struck off, and the opuscule, with a short dedication to the Earl of Pembroke, was published in a separate form. Locke went to Amsterdam for the purpose of superintending the printing of the epitome, and appears to have been sorely tried by the "drunken" and "lying" workmen, who, however, were all "good Christians," "orthodox believers," and "marked for salvation by the distinguishing L that stands on their door-posts, or the funeral sermon that they may have for a passport if they will go to the charge of it." On the 29th of February he returned to Furly's house, where he seems to have lived in great comfort, and on most intimate and affectionate terms with the family. One of the sons, a little boy of four or five years old, named Arent, was a special favourite, and is playfully alluded to in the letters to Furly as "my little friend!" Kindness to children seems always to have been one of Locke's characteristics, as it is of all men of simple manners and warm hearts.

It was on the 1st of November, 1688, that William of Orange set out on his expedition to England. Locke still remained in Holland, and appears to have had frequent interviews with the Princess Mary, who was waiting till she could with safety join her husband. At last the word was given from England, and, after being detained for some time by unfavourable weather, the royal party, accompanied by Locke and Lady Mordaunt, left the Hague on the 11th of February, 1688-9. They arrived at Greenwich on the following day. It was with mixed feelings that Locke took leave of the country where he had been entertained so long, and where he had formed so many warm and congenial friendships. Writing to Limborch

shortly before his departure, he says: "There are many considerations which urge me not to miss this opportunity of sailing: the expectation of my friends; my private affairs, which have now been long neglected; the number of pirates in the channel; and the charge of the noble lady (Lady Mordaunt) with whom I am about to travel. But I trust that you will believe me when I say that I have found here another country, and I might almost say other relations; for all that is dearest in that expression—good-will, love, kindness—bonds that are stronger than blood—I have experienced amongst you. It is owing to this fellow-feeling, which has always been shown to me by your countrymen, that, though absent from my own people and exposed to every kind of trouble, I have never yet felt sick at heart."[1] Still, it must have been with a thrill of delight that, after an absence of more than five years, he once more stepped on the shores of his native land, and felt that a new era of liberty and glory had dawned for her.

About a week after his arrival in England, Locke was offered, through Lord Mordaunt, the post of ambassador to Frederick the First, Elector of Brandenburg. The letter to Lord Mordaunt, in which he declines the post, shows the feeble condition in which, notwithstanding all his precautions, his health still continued. "It is the most touching displeasure I have ever received from that weak and broken constitution of my health, which has so long threatened my life, that it now affords me not a body suitable to my mind in so desirable an occasion of serving his Majesty. What shall a man do in the necessity of application and variety of attendance on business who sometimes, after a little motion, has not breath to speak,

[1] It should be mentioned, perhaps, that the correspondence between Locke and Limborch is in Latin.

and cannot borrow an hour or two of watching from the night without repaying it with a great waste of time the next day?" But there was another reason, besides his health, why he could not accept a mission to the Court of Brandenburg. "If I have reason to apprehend the cold air of the country, there is yet another thing in it as inconsistent with my constitution, and that is their warm drinking." It was true that he might oppose obstinate refusal, but then that would be to take more care of his own health than of the king's business. "It is no small matter in such stations to be acceptable to the people one has to do with, in being able to accommodate one's self to their fashions; and I imagine, whatever I may do there myself, the knowing what others are doing is at least one half of my business, and I know no such rack in the world to draw out men's thoughts as a well-managed bottle. If, therefore, it were fit for me to advise in this case, I should think it more for the king's interest to send a man of equal parts, that could drink his share, than the soberest man in the kingdom." But, though Locke shrank from this post, the importance of which could hardly be exaggerated, for Frederick was the ally on whom William most confided in his opposition to Louis the Fourteenth, he was ready to place his services at the disposal of the Government for domestic work. "If there be anything wherein I may flatter myself I have attained any degree of capacity to serve his Majesty, it is in some little knowledge I perhaps may have in the constitutions of my country, the temper of my countrymen, and the divisions amongst them, whereby I persuade myself I may be more useful to him at home, though I cannot but see that such an employment would be of greater advantage to myself abroad, would but my health assent to it." The disin-

terested patriotism of this letter was only of a piece with the whole of Locke's political life. He was next offered the embassy to Vienna, and, in fact, invited to name any diplomatic appointment which he would be prepared to accept; but he regarded his health as an insuperable bar to work of this kind at so critical a time in the history of Europe. Having declined all foreign employment, he was now named a Commissioner of Appeals, an office with small emolument and not much work, which he appears to have retained during the remainder of his life. This office seems to have been given to him partly as a compensation for the arrears of salary due under the late Government; for, with an exhausted exchequer, it was impossible to satisfy such claims by immediate payment.

Locke's health suffered considerably by his return to London. Writing to Limborch shortly after his arrival, and complaining of the worry caused him by the pressure of private affairs and public business, the climax of all his grievances, we are hardly surprised to find, is the injury to his health "from the pestilent smoke of this city" (*Malignus hujus urbis fumus*). Amongst the public affairs which claimed his attention, the foremost, doubtless, was the attempt then being made to widen the basis of the National Church by a measure of comprehension, as well as to relieve of civil disabilities the more extreme or scrupulous of the sectaries by what was called a measure of indulgence or toleration. Locke, of course, with his friend Lord Mordaunt, took the most liberal side open to him as respects these measures; but he complains that the episcopal clergy were unfavourable to these as well as to other reforms, whether to their own advantage and that of the State it was for them to consider. Unfortunately both for the Church and nation, the issue of the religious

struggles which were carried on at the beginning of William's reign was, on the whole, in favour of the less tolerant party. The Comprehension Bill, after being violently attacked and languidly defended, was dropped altogether. The Toleration Bill, though passed by pretty general consent, and affording a considerable measure of relief on the existing law, was entirely of the nature of a compromise, and what we should now note as most remarkable in it is the number of its provisos and exceptions. No relief was granted to the believer in transubstantiation or the disbeliever in the Trinity. No dissenting minister, moreover, was allowed to exercise his vocation unless he subscribed thirty-four out of the Thirty-nine Articles, together with the greater part of two others. The Quakers had to make a special declaration of belief in the Holy Trinity and in the Divine inspiration of the Scriptures. The measure of toleration which Locke would have been prepared to grant, it need hardly be said, far exceeded that which was accorded by the Act. Speaking of the law recently passed in a letter to Limborch on the 6th of June, he uses apologetic language. "Toleration has indeed been granted, but not with that latitude which you and men like you, true Christians without ambition or envy, would desire. But it is something to have got thus far. On these beginnings I hope are laid the foundations of liberty and peace on which the Church of Christ will hereafter be established." In a subsequent letter, speaking again of the same law, he says, "People will always differ from one another about religion, and carry on constant strife and war, until the right of every one to perfect liberty in these matters is conceded, and they can be united in one body by a bond of mutual charity." If there be any truth in the tradition to which

Lord King alludes, that Locke himself negotiated the terms of the Toleration Act, he must have regarded it simply as an instalment of religious liberty, the utmost that could be procured under the circumstances, and an earnest of better things to come.

On William's accession to the throne, one only of the English Sees was vacant, the Bishopric of Salisbury. To this he nominated the famous Gilbert Burnet, who had been one of his advisers in Holland. Locke, in one of his letters to Limborch, tells a rather malicious story of the new prelate. When he paid his first visit to the king after his consecration, his Majesty observed that his hat was a good deal larger than usual, and asked him what was the object of so very much brim. The bishop replied that it was the shape suitable to his dignity. "I hope," answered the king, "that the hat won't turn your head."

The topic that most interested Locke probably at this time, next to the political regeneration of his country, was the approaching publication of the *Essay*. The work must have been finished, or all but finished, when he left Holland. In May, 1689, he wrote the dedication to the Earl of Pembroke, and the printing commenced shortly afterwards. The proof-sheets were sent to Le Clerc. As before at Amsterdam, the printers appear to have caused him some trouble, but the book was in the booksellers' shops early in 1690. It is a fine folio, "printed by Eliz. Holt for Thomas Basset at the George in Fleet Street, near St. Dunstan's Church." Locke received 30*l.* for the copyright. But when we remember that Milton only lived to receive 10*l.* for *Paradise Lost*, we cannot feel much surprise at Locke's rate of payment. The days when authorship was to become a lucrative profession were still far distant in England.

Previously to the publication of the *Essay*, in the spring of 1689, the *Epistola de Tolerantia* had appeared at Gouda, in Holland; but it was published anonymously, and apparently without Locke's knowledge, the responsibility of giving it to the world being undertaken by Limborch, to whom it had been addressed. On the title-page are some mysterious letters, the invention, probably, of Limborch: "Epistola de Tolerantia ad Clarissimum Virum T. A. R. P. T. O. L. A. Scripta a P. A. P. O. I. L. A." These being interpreted, are, "Theologiæ Apud Remonstrantes Professorem, Tyrannidis Osorem, Limborchium Amstelodamensem;" and "Pacis Amico, Persecutionis Osore, Joanne Lockio Anglo." Dutch and French translations were issued almost immediately, and the book at once created considerable discussion on the Continent; but it does not at the first appear to have excited much attention in England. Locke himself was for some time unable to obtain a copy. In the course of the year, however, it was translated into English by one William Popple, an Unitarian merchant residing in London. In the preface the translator, alluding to recent legislation, says, "We have need of more generous remedies than what have yet been made use of in our distemper. It is neither declarations of indulgence nor acts of comprehension, such as have as yet been practised or projected amongst us, that can do the work. Absolute liberty, just and true liberty, equal and impartial liberty, is the thing that we stand in need of."

Locke affords a curious instance of a man who, having carefully shunned publication up to a late period of life, then gave forth a series of works in rapid succession. It would seem as if he had long mistrusted his own powers, or as if he had doubted of the expediency of at once

seeking a wide circulation for his views, but that, having once ventured to reveal himself to the public, he was emboldened, if not impelled, to proceed. Early in 1690, there appeared not only the *Essay*, but also the *Two Treatises of Government*. These were published anonymously, but it must soon have been known that Locke was their author. For reasons which I have given in another chapter, the former of the two treatises, which is a criticism of Sir Robert Filmer's *Patriarcha*, seems to have been written between 1680 and 1685, the latter during the concluding period of Locke's stay in Holland, while the English Revolution was being prepared and consummated.

The translation of the Epistle on Toleration soon provoked a lively controversy. To one answer, that by Jonas Proast, Locke replied in a *Second Letter concerning Toleration*, signed by Philanthropus, and dated May 27th, 1690. Proast, as the manner is in such controversies, replied again, and Locke wrote a *Third Letter for Toleration*, again signed Philanthropus, and dated June 20, 1692. After many years' silence, Proast wrote a rejoinder in 1704, and to this Locke replied in the *Fourth Letter for Toleration*, which, however, he did not live to publish, or, indeed, to complete. It appeared amongst his Posthumous Works. These Letters on Toleration doubtless exercised great influence in their day, and probably contributed, in large measure, to bring about the more enlightened views on this subject which in this country, at least, are now all but universal.

The authorship of the Letters on Toleration, though it could hardly fail to be pretty generally known, was first distinctly acknowledged by Locke in the codicil to his will. Limborch, on being hard pressed, had divulged it,

in the spring of 1690, to Guenellon and Veen, but they appear, contrary to what generally happens in such cases, to have kept the secret to themselves. Locke, however, was much irritated at the indiscretion of Limborch, and, for once, wrote him an angry letter. "If you had entrusted me with a secret of this kind, I would not have divulged it to relation, or friend, or any mortal being, under any circumstances whatsoever. You do not know the trouble into which you have brought me." It is not easy to see why Locke should have felt so disquieted at the prospect of his authorship being discovered, but it may be that he hoped to bring about some extension of the limits of the Toleration Act which had been passed in the preceding year, and that he feared that his hands might be tied by the discovery that he entertained what, at that time, would be regarded as such extreme views; or it may have been simply that he was afraid, if his authorship were once acknowledged, of being dragged into a long and irksome controversy with the bigots of the various ecclesiastical parties, which were then endeavouring to maintain or recover their ascendancy.

CHAPTER V.

LIFE AT OATES. FRIENDSHIPS. FURTHER PUBLICATIONS.

SHORTLY after Locke returned to England, he settled down in lodgings in the neighbourhood of what is now called Cannon Row, Westminster. But the fogs and smoke of London then, as now, were not favourable to persons of delicate health, and he seems to have been glad of any opportunity of breathing the country air. Amongst his places of resort were Parson's Green, the suburban residence of Lord Mordaunt, now Earl of Monmouth, and Oates, a manor-house, in the parish of High Laver, in Essex, the seat of Sir Francis and Lady Masham, situated in a pleasant pastoral country, about twenty miles from London. Lady Masham had become known to him as Damaris Cudworth, before his retreat to Holland, and it is plain that from the first she had excited his admiration and esteem. She was the daughter of Dr. Ralph Cudworth, Master of Christ's College, Cambridge, author of *The True Intellectual System of the Universe*, and of a posthumous work, still better known, *A Treatise concerning Eternal and Immutable Morality*. The close connexion which, in the latter years of his life, subsisted between Locke, the foremost name amongst the empirical philosophers of modern times, and the daughter of Cudworth, the most uncompromising of the *a priori* moralists and philosophers

of the seventeenth century, may be regarded as one of the ironies of literary history. Damaris Cudworth, inheriting her father's tastes, took great interest in learning of all kinds, and specially in philosophy and theology. There was one point of community between her father and Locke, besides their common pursuits, namely, the wide and philosophical view which they both took of theological controversies. Cudworth belonged to the small but learned and refined group of Cambridge Platonists or Latitudinarians, as they were called, which also numbered Henry More, John Smith, Culverwell, and Whichcote. Liberal and tolerant Churchmanship in those days, when it was so rare, was probably a much closer bond of union than it is now, and the associations which she had formed with her father's liberal, philosophical, and devout spirit must have helped to endear Locke to the daughter of Dr. Cudworth. During Locke's absence from England, Damaris Cudworth had been married, as his second wife, to Sir Francis Masham, an amiable and hospitable country gentleman, who seems to have occupied a prominent position in his county. With them lived Mrs. Cudworth, the widow of Dr. Cudworth, one little son, Francis, and a daughter by the former marriage, Esther, who was about fourteen when Locke commenced his visits to the family. From the first he seems to have had some idea of settling down at Oates, "making trial of the air of the place," than which, as Lady Masham tells us, "he thought none would be more suitable to him." After a very severe illness in the autumn of 1690, he spent several months with the Mashams, and appears then to have formed a more definite plan of making Oates his home. But, though his hospitable friends gave him every assurance of a constant welcome, he would only consent to regard it as a per-

manent residence on his own terms, which were that he should pay his share of the household expenses. With true kindness and courtesy, Sir Francis and Lady Masham, at last, in the spring of 1691, agreed to this arrangement, and "Mr. Locke then," says Lady Masham, "believed himself at home with us, and resolved, if it pleased God, here to end his days—as he did." Devoted and sympathetic friends, a pleasant residence, freedom from domestic or pecuniary cares, and the pure fresh air of the country seem to have afforded him all the enjoyment and leisure which we could have wished for him. After having had more than his share of the storms of life, he had at last found a quiet and pleasant haven wherein to enjoy the calm and sunshine of his declining years. Occasionally, and especially during the summer, he visited London, where, at first, he retained his old chambers at Westminster, moving afterwards to Lincoln's Inn Fields. But Oates was now his home, and it continued to be so to the end of his life.

Locke was always an attached friend, and we have seen already how many warm friendships he had formed in youth and middle age. At the present time, besides Limborch, Le Clerc, Lord Monmouth, and the Mashams, we may mention among his more intimate friends, Lord Pembroke, the young Lord Ashley, Somers, Boyle, and Newton. Lord Pembroke (to whom the *Essay* is dedicated in what we should now regard as a tone of overwrought compliment) opened his town house for weekly meetings in which, instead of political and personal gossip, things of the mind were discussed. These conversations, "undisturbed by such as could not bear a part in the best entertainment of rational minds, free discourse concerning useful truths," were a source of great enjoy-

ment to Locke during his London residence. It was through his introduction that Lord Pembroke, when sent on a special mission to the Hague, made the acquaintance, which afterwards ripened into friendship, of Limborch and Le Clerc.

The correspondence between Locke and Limborch, while Lord Pembroke was in Holland, reveals to us the curious fact that there was no organized carrying trade between England and Holland at that time. On returning, the Earl, or his Secretary, was commissioned to bring back a pound of tea and copies of the *Acta Eruditorum*. The tea must be had at any price. "I want the best tea," Locke writes to Limborch, "even if it costs forty florins a pound; only you must be quick, or we shall lose this opportunity, and I doubt whether we shall have another." The price that he was ready to pay for a pound of tea would be about 9*l*. at the present value of money. But tea at that time was regarded rather as a medicine than a beverage.

Young Lord Ashley, it will be recollected, had, like his father, been under the charge of Locke, when a child. After being at school for some years at Winchester, and spending some time in travelling on the Continent, he was now again in London, living in his father's house at Chelsea. It is plain that the young philosopher saw a good deal of his "foster-father," as he called him, and they must often have discussed together the questions which were so interesting to them both. Ashley, moreover, who was already beginning to solve the problems of philosophy in his own way, addressed a number of letters to Locke, freely, but courteously and good-humouredly, criticizing his master's views.

Sir John Somers, now Solicitor-General, and succes-

sively Attorney-General, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, and Lord Chancellor, with the title of Lord Somers, had been known to Locke before his retirement to Holland. They were both of them attached to the Shaftesbury connexion, and, hence, though Somers was nearly twenty years the junior, they had probably already seen a good deal of each other when William ascended the throne. On Locke's return to England, he found Somers a member of the Convention Parliament. The younger man, both when he was a rising barrister and a successful minister, seems frequently to have consulted the elder one, and Locke's principles of government, finance, and toleration, must often have exerted a considerable influence both on his speeches and his measures. Nor had Locke any reason to be ashamed of his teaching. "Lord Somers," says Horace Walpole, "was one of those divine men who, like a chapel in a palace, remain unprofaned, while all the rest is tyranny, corruption, and folly." It was, perhaps, through Somers that Locke made the acquaintance of another great and wise statesman, Charles Montague, subsequently Lord Halifax, with whom, at least during the later years of his life, he had much political connexion, and by whom he was frequently called into counsel.

The acquaintance between Locke and Newton, of whom Newton was the junior by more than ten years, most probably began before Locke's departure to Holland. Both had then for some time been members of the Royal Society, and both were friends of Boyle. The first positive evidence, however, that we have of their relations is afforded by a paper, entitled "A Demonstration that the Planets, by their gravity towards the Sun, may move in Ellipses," and endorsed in Locke's handwriting, "Mr. Newton, March, 1689." In the summer or autumn of the

same year, probably, was written the epistle to the reader, prefixed to the *Essay*. In that occurs the following passage, expressing no doubt Locke's genuine opinion of the great writers whom he names :—"The Commonwealth of learning is not at this time without master-builders, whose mighty designs in advancing the sciences will leave lasting monuments to the admiration of posterity ; but every one must not hope to be a Boyle or a Sydenham, and in an age that produces such masters as the great Huygenius and the incomparable Mr. Newton, with some other of that strain, 'tis ambition enough to be employed as an under-labourer in clearing ground a little, and removing some of the rubbish that lies in the way to knowledge." Locke interested himself long and warmly in attempting to obtain for Newton some lucrative appointment in London. Newton's letters occasionally betray querulousness, but there can be no reason to suppose that Locke at all flagged in his efforts, and, ultimately, with the assistance of Lord Monmouth, Lord Halifax, and others, they proved successful. Newton was, in course of time, appointed Warden, and then Master of the Mint. In January, 1690-1, the philosopher and the mathematician met at Oates. Their conversation there probably turned chiefly on theological topics, as was the case with most of their correspondence afterwards. Newton was greatly interested not only in theological speculation, but in the interpretation of prophecy and Biblical criticism, on both of which subjects works by him are extant. In 1690 he wrote a manuscript letter to Locke, entitled, "An Historical Account of Two Notable Corruptions of Scripture in a Letter to a Friend," the texts criticized being 1 John v. 7, and 1 Timothy iii. 16. The corruption of the former of these texts is now almost univer-

sally, and that of the latter very generally, acknowledged, but so jealous of orthodoxy, in respect of anything which seemed to affect the doctrine of the Trinity, was public opinion at that time that Newton did not dare to publish the pamphlet. Locke, who was meditating a visit to Holland, was, by Newton's wish, to have taken it over with him, and to have had it translated into French, and published anonymously. But the intended visit fell through, and Locke sent the manuscript over to Le Clerc. So timid, however, was Newton that he now tried to recall it. "Let me entreat you," he writes to Locke, "to stop the translation and impression of the papers as soon as you can, for I desire to suppress them." Le Clerc thought more nobly and more justly that "one ought to risk a little in order to be of service to those honest folk who err only through ignorance, and who, if they get a chance, would gladly be disabused of their false notions." The letter was not published till after its author's death, and at first it appeared only in an imperfect form. In Bishop Horsley's edition of Newton it is printed complete. Newton's unpublished writings leave no doubt that he did not accept the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity, and it may have been his consciousness of this fact which made him so afraid of being known to be the author of what was merely a critical exercitation. But we must recollect that at this time Biblical criticism was unfamiliar to the majority of divines, and that to question the authenticity of a text was generally regarded as identical with doubting the doctrine which it was supposed to illustrate. One of the other subjects on which Locke and Newton corresponded was a parcel of red earth which had been left by Boyle, who died on Dec. 30, 1691, to Locke and his other literary executors, with directions for turn-

ing it into gold. Locke seems to have had some faith in the alchemistic process, but it is plain that Newton had none. He was satisfied that "mercury, by this recipe, might be brought to change its colours and properties, but not that gold might be multiplied thereby." Some workmen of whom he had heard as practising the recipe had been forced to other means of living, a proof that the multiplication of gold did not succeed as a profession. Occasionally, owing to Newton's nervous and irritable temper, which at one time threatened to settle down into a fixed melancholy, there seems to have been some misunderstanding of Locke on his part, but it is satisfactory to know that the two greatest literary men of their age in England, if not in Europe, lived, almost without interruption, in friendly and even intimate relations with each other.

The close intercourse between Boyle and Locke, which dated from their Oxford days, seems to have been kept up till the time of Boyle's death. Locke made a special journey to London to visit him on his deathbed, and was, as we have seen, left one of his literary executors. The editing of Boyle's *General History of the Air* had already been committed to Locke, and seems to have occupied much of his time during the year 1691.

Of Locke's less-known friends, Dr. David Thomas must have died between 1687, when there is a letter from him to Locke, and 1700, when Locke speaks of having outlived him. Sir James Tyrrell, another old college friend, usually spoken of in Locke's correspondence as Musidore, was in communication with him as late as April, 1704, the year of his death. He had, as already stated, been present at the "meeting of five or six friends" in Locke's

chamber, which first suggested the composition of the *Essay*.

Edward Clarke, of Chipley, near Taunton, was another friend of old standing. He was elected member for Taunton in King William's second parliament, and from that time forward resided much in London. This circumstance probably deepened the intimacy between the two friends; at all events, during the remainder of Locke's life they are constantly associated. Locke advised Clarke as to the education of his children, one of whom, Betty, a little girl now about ten years old, seems to have been regarded by him with peculiar affection; in his letters he constantly speaks of her as "Mrs. Locke" and his "wife." The playful banter with which Locke treated his child friends affords unmistakeable evidence of the kindness and simplicity of his heart.

William Molyneux, who for many years represented the University of Dublin in the Irish parliament, referred to in the second edition of the *Essay* as "that very ingenious and studious promoter of real knowledge, the worthy and learned Mr. Molyneux," "this thinking gentleman whom, though I have never had the happiness to see, I am proud to call my friend," first became acquainted with Locke in 1692. In his *Dioptrica Nova*, published in that year, he had paid Locke a graceful, if not an exaggerated, compliment. "To none do we owe, for a greater advancement in this part of philosophy," he said, speaking of logic, "than to the incomparable Mr. Locke, who hath rectified more received mistakes, and delivered more profound truths, established on experience and observation, for the direction of man's mind in the prosecution of knowledge, which I think may be properly termed logic, than are to be met with in all the volumes

of the ancients. He has clearly overthrown all those metaphysical whimsies which infected men's brains with a spice of madness, whereby they feigned a knowledge where they had none, by making a noise with sounds without clear and distinct significations." Locke was pleased with the compliment, and a letter acknowledging the receipt of Molyneux's book was the beginning of a long correspondence between them, which ended only with the early death of Molyneux, at the age of forty-two, in 1698. For nearly six years the friends, though in constant correspondence, had never seen each other, Molyneux residing in Dublin, and suffering, like Locke, from feeble health, which prevented him from crossing the channel. But the feeling of affection seems soon to have become as intense, notwithstanding Aristotle's dictum that personal intercourse is essential to the continuance of friendship, as if they had lived together all their lives. In his second letter to Molyneux, dated September 20, 1692, Locke says :— 'You must expect to have me live with you hereafter, with all the liberty and assurance of a settled friendship. For meeting with but few men in the world whose acquaintance I find much reason to covet, I make more than ordinary haste into the familiarity of a rational inquirer after and lover of truth, whenever I can light on any such. There are beauties of the mind as well as of the body, that take and prevail at first sight; and, wherever I have met with this, I have readily surrendered myself, and have never yet been deceived in my expectation." Molyneux had thought of coming over to England on a visit to Locke in the summer of 1694. Locke, in a letter written in the following spring, after deprecating the risks to which his journey might expose him, adds :— "And yet, if I may confess my secret thoughts, there is not

anything which I would not give, that some other unavoidable occasion would draw you into England. A rational, free-minded man, tied to nothing but truth, is so rare a thing that I almost worship such a friend; but, when friendship is joined to it, and these are brought into a free conversation, where they meet and can be together, what is there can have equal charms? I cannot but exceedingly wish for that happy day when I may see a man I have so often longed to have in my embraces. You cannot think how often I regret the distance that is between us; I envy Dublin for what I every day want in London." In a subsequent letter, written in 1695, he writes:—"I cannot complain that I have not my share of friends of all ranks, and such, whose interest, assistance, affection, and opinions too, in fit cases, I can rely on. But methinks, for all this, there is one place vacant that I know nobody would so well fill as yourself; I want one near me to talk freely with "de quolibet ente," to propose to the extravagancies that rise in my mind; one with whom I would debate several doubts and questions to see what was in them." Thomas Molyneux, the brother of William, a physician practising in Dublin, had met Locke during his stay in Holland. They shared a common admiration for Sydenham, and the correspondence with William Molyneux revived their friendship, though it never attained to nearly the same proportions as that between Locke and the other brother. A passage on what may be called the Logic of Medicine, in one of Locke's letters to Thomas Molyneux, is worth quoting:—"What we know of the works of nature, especially in the constitution of health and the operations of our own bodies, is only by the sensible effects, but not by any certainty we can have of the tools she uses or the ways she walks by. So that there is nothing

left for a physician to do but to observe well, and so, by analogy, argue to like cases, and thence make to himself rules of practice."

November 7, 1691, is the date of the dedication of the Tract entitled, "Some considerations on the Lowering of Interest and Raising the Value of Money in a letter sent to a Member of Parliament, 1691." This letter was published anonymously in the following year. The member of Parliament was undoubtedly Sir John Somers, who had "put" the author "upon looking out his old papers concerning the reducing of interest to 4 per cent., which had so long," nearly twenty years, "lain by, forgotten." The time to which Locke refers must be the year 1672, when the Exchequer was closed, that is to say, all payments to the public creditors suspended for a year, and the interest on the Bankers' advances reduced to six per cent. This nefarious act of spoliation, which caused wide-spread ruin and distress, was devised while Shaftesbury was Chancellor of the Exchequer, but the main blame in the transaction probably attaches to Clifford. "The notions concerning coinage," which are embodied in the second division of the pamphlet, had been put into writing and apparently shown to Somers about twelve months before the date of the letter. On the occasion and contents of this pamphlet, as well as of Locke's other tracts on Finance, I shall have an opportunity of speaking in subsequent chapters.

Many of my readers will sympathize with Locke in his complaints of the waste of his time during this autumn. Writing to Limborch on Nov. 14, he says, "I know not how it is, but the pressure of other people's business has left me no time or leisure for my own affairs. Do not suppose

that I mean public business. I have neither health, nor strength, nor knowledge enough to attend to that. And when I ask myself what has so hampered and occupied me during the last three months, it seems as if a sort of spell had been thrown on me, so that I have got entangled first in one business and then in another, without being able to avoid it, or, in fact, to foresee what was coming." Locke was pre-eminently a good-natured man, and, like many other men before and since, he had to pay the penalty of good-nature by doing a vast amount of other people's business, often probably with scant acknowledgment. One of the occupations in which he was engaged may have been doctoring the household at Oates and advising medically for his friends at a distance; but in business of this kind, though he may have grudged the time it consumed, he seems always to have taken special delight.

In the summer of 1692 he spent a considerable time in London. His main business there seems to have been to see the *Third Letter on Toleration* through the press. But he was now, as ever, ready to do work for his friends. Thus he obtained for Limborch the permission to dedicate the book which he had so long been preparing, the *Historia Inquisitionis*, to Tillotson, then Archbishop of Canterbury. Limborch evidently set great store on this privilege. Of Tillotson, Locke seems to have entertained a very high opinion; which, indeed, was thoroughly well-deserved. "In proportion to his renown and worth is his modesty." Tillotson was not one of those liberal Churchmen whom promotion makes timid, or cold to their former friends. He was maligned by an unforgiving and unscrupulous faction, more, perhaps, than any other man of that age, but he always retained the courage of his opinions.

Locke's health seems to have suffered much during the winter of 1692-3. But he still occupied himself with literary work. While in Holland, he had corresponded frequently with Clarke on the education of his children. Yielding to the solicitation of many of his friends, especially William Molyneux, he now reduced the letters to the form of a treatise, which was published in July, 1693, under the title, *Some Thoughts concerning Education*. The dedication to Clarke bears date in the previous March, and is signed by Locke, though his name does not appear on the title-page. The most serious work, however, in which he was now engaged, was the preparation of a second edition of the *Essay*. The first edition seems to have been exhausted in the autumn of 1692. On the alterations and additions introduced into the second edition, there is an interesting correspondence with Molyneux, ranging from Sept. 20, 1692, to May 26, 1694, when the new edition, notwithstanding the "slowness of the press," was "printed and bound, and ready to be sent" to Locke's Dublin correspondent. Besides suggestions in detail, such as those touching the questions of liberty and personal identity, Molyneux urged Locke to undertake a separate work on Ethics, a suggestion which for a time he entertained favourably, but which, owing partly, perhaps, to his idea that the principles and rules of morality ought to be presented in a demonstrative form, was never carried out. Though he does not seem to have doubted that "morality might be demonstrably made out," yet whether he was able so to make it out was another question. "Every one could not have demonstrated what Mr. Newton's book hath shown to be demonstrable." He was, however, ready to employ the first leisure he could find that way. But the treatise never proceeded beyond

a few rough notes. Another reason assigned, at a later period, for not more seriously setting about this task was that "the Gospel contains so perfect a body of ethics, that reason may be excused for that inquiry, since she may find man's duty clearer and easier in revelation than in herself." This argument shows, at once, the sincerity of Locke's religious convictions, and the inadequate conception he had formed to himself of the grounds and nature of Moral Philosophy. Another suggestion made by Molyneux, was that, besides a second edition of the *Essay*, Locke should bring out, in accordance with the main lines of his philosophy, another work forming a complete compendium of logic and metaphysics for the use of University Students. No one can regret that the author of the *Essay* did not adopt this advice. Apropos of this suggestion, Molyneux tells Locke that Dr. Ashe, then Provost of Trinity College, Dublin, "was so wonderfully pleased and satisfied with the work, that he has ordered it to be read by the bachelors in the college, and strictly examines them in their progress therein." From that time onwards the *Essay* seems to have held its ground as a class-book at Dublin. The reception which it met with at first from the authorities of Locke's own University, as we shall see presently, was widely different. In May, 1694, the second edition was on sale, and was quickly exhausted. The third edition, which is simply a reprint of the second, appeared in the following year. One more edition, the fourth, dated 1700, but issued in the autumn of 1699, appeared during Locke's lifetime. In it there are important alterations and additions, including two new chapters, that on Enthusiasm, and the very important one, at the end of the second book, on the Association of Ideas. A Latin translation of the *Essay* by Richard

Burridge, an Irish Clergyman, was published at London, in 1701, and a French translation by Pierre Coste, who was a friend of Le Clerc, and had been acting for some time as tutor to young Frank Masham, at Amsterdam, in 1700. John Wynne, Fellow of Jesus College, Oxford, and subsequently Bishop of St. Asaph, published an abridgment for the use of University Students, in 1696. Wynne had a large number of pupils, and the compendium of Locke's philosophy appears to have obtained rapid circulation among the younger students in Oxford, only, however, as we shall soon see, to encounter the opposition of the authorities.

It is notable that all the important alterations and additions made in the second edition of the *Essay* were printed on separate slips and issued, without charge, to those who possessed the first. Sir James Tyrrell's copy of the first edition, with these slips pasted in, is in the British Museum, and that of William Molyneux in the Bodleian. In sending to Molyneux the second edition, Locke had also forwarded the slips to be pasted in the first, which would "help to make the book useful to any young man;" but whether Molyneux gave the copy now in the Bodleian to "any young man," and, if so, who the fortunate young man was, we do not learn.

The first writer who had taken up his pen against Locke was John Norris, the amiable and celebrated Vicar of Bemerton, a religious and philosophical mystic, whose works are even still in repute. Norris was a disciple of Malebranche, and his attack seems to have had the effect of leading Locke to make a careful study of the theories of the French philosopher. The result was two tractates —one entitled, *Remarks upon some of Mr. Norris's Books;* the other, *An Examination of Père Malebranche's Opinion*

of seeing all things in God. The latter is much the more considerable production of the two, and is mainly remarkable as showing that Locke saw clearly that the conclusions, subsequently drawn by Berkeley, must follow from Malebranche's premises. Neither of these tracts was published till after Locke's death. The reasons assigned by him for not publishing his criticisms of Malebranche are characteristic: "I love not controversies, and have a personal kindness for the author."

Locke's literary activity during the years 1689-95 appears excessive; but we must recollect that he had already accumulated a vast amount of material, and that, during the latter part of that time at least, he must have enjoyed considerable leisure in his country retirement. In the early months of 1695 he was mainly occupied with a new subject, the *Essay on the Reasonableness of Christianity as delivered in the Scriptures.* Though this work was designed to establish the supernatural character of the Christian revelation, and its importance to mankind, it by no means satisfied the canons of a strict orthodoxy. Some of the more mysterious and less intelligible doctrines of the Christian Church, if not denied, were at least represented as unessential to saving faith. Hence it at once provoked a bitter controversy. "The buz, the flutter, and noise which was made, and the reports which were raised," says its author, "would have persuaded the world that it subverted all morality, and was designed against the Christian religion. I must confess, discussions of this kind, which I met with, spread up and down, at first amazed me; knowing the sincerity of those thoughts which persuaded me to publish it, not without some hope of doing some service to decaying piety and mistaken and slandered Christianity." The first assailant was John

Edwards, a former Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge, who in a violent pamphlet, entitled *Thoughts concerning the Causes and Occasions of Atheism*, included the *Reasonableness of Christianity* in his attack, and insinuated that Locke was its author by affecting to disbelieve it. The book was described as "all over Socinianized," and a Socinian, if not an atheist, is, according to Edwards, "one that favours the cause of atheism." That there was much similarity between the apparent opinions of Locke and the doctrines of Faustus Socinus himself, though not of Socinus's more extreme followers, who were also popularly called Socinians, admits of no doubt. But the charge of favouring atheism can only have been brought against a man who regarded the existence of God as "the most obvious truth that reason discovers," and who appears never to have questioned the reality of supernatural intervention, from time to time, in the world's history, because it happened to be the roughest stone that could be found in the controversial wallet. Locke replied to Edwards with pardonable asperity in a tract entitled, *A Vindication of the Reasonableness of Christianity*. Edwards, of course, soon replied to the reply, and attacked Locke more violently than ever in his *Socinianism Unmasked*. No rejoinder followed, but the adversary was not to be let off on such easy terms. Another shot was fired, and *The Socinian Creed*, as venomous and more successful than the *Socinianism Unmasked*, provoked *A Second Vindication*. This lengthy pamphlet, far more elaborate than the first, must have occupied much of Locke's time. It did not appear till the spring of 1697. Edwards returned to the charge; but, fortunately, Locke had the wisdom and courage to refrain from carrying on the fight. Bitter as the feeling against

Locke must have been in many clerical circles at this time, there were not wanting, even amongst the clergy, those who sympathized with his views. Mr. Bolde, a Dorsetshire clergyman, came forward to defend him against Edwards. And Molyneux, writing on the 26th of September, 1696, says, "As to the *Reasonableness of Christianity*, I do not find but it is very well approved of here amongst candid, unprejudiced men, that dare speak their thoughts. I'll tell you what a very learned and ingenious prelate said to me on that occasion. I asked him whether he had read that book, and how he liked it. He told me very well; and that, if my friend Mr. Locke writ it, it was the best book he ever laboured at; 'but,' says he, 'if I should be known to think so, I should have my lawns torn from my shoulders.' But he knew my opinion aforehand, and was, therefore, the freer to commit his secret thoughts in that matter to me." We may not be disposed to think highly of the "very learned and ingenious prelate;" but the story shows, as indeed we know from other sources, to what a volume of opinion, both lay and clerical, on the expediency of presenting Christianity in a more "reasonable" and less mysterious and dogmatic form, Locke's treatise had given expression. Men were anxious to retain their beliefs in the supernatural order of events, but they were equally anxious to harmonize them with what they regarded as the necessities of reason. The current of "Rationalism" had set in.

It is satisfactory to know that, amidst all these controversial worries, which must have been most distasteful to a man of his habits and temper, Locke enjoyed the solace of pleasant companionship and domestic serenity. He was thoroughly at home at Oates, and Lord Monmouth and his other friends in and near town seem always to have

been ready to accord him a hearty welcome, whenever he cared to pay them a visit. His little "wife," Betty Clarke, and her brother used occasionally to come on visits to him at the Mashams, and he seems to have taken great delight in the society of Esther Masham, who was now rapidly growing up to womanhood. "In raillery," wrote this lady many years afterwards, "he used to call me his Lindabridis, and I called him my John." The winters of 1694-5 and 1695-6 were unusually long and severe, and in both of them Locke appears to have been under apprehensions that his chronic illness might terminate in death.

It may here be noticed that, in the summer of 1694, Locke became one of the original proprietors of the Bank of England, which, having been projected by a merchant named William Paterson, had been established by Act of Parliament in April of that year, and invested with certain trading privileges, on condition that it should lend its capital to the Government at eight per cent. interest. The plan had encountered great opposition, especially among the landed gentry, and had only been carried through the strenuous exertions of Montague and the Whig party. Locke subscribed 500*l.*, a considerable sum in those days.

CHAPTER VI.

POLITICAL AFFAIRS — PUBLIC OCCUPATIONS — RELATIONS WITH THE KING.

NOTWITHSTANDING his retirement to Oates, and his incessant literary activity, Locke never lost his interest in politics, and, as the friend and admirer of men like Monmouth, Somers, and Clarke, he must always have exercised a considerable influence on the policy of the whig party. In the spring of 1695 he seems to have taken a primary share in determining a measure which, for a time, divided the Houses of Lords and Commons, and which must have enlisted his warmest sympathies. This was the repeal of the Licensing Act. The English Press had never been wholly free, and the Act of Charles II., which was still in force, was peculiarly stringent. Occasion had been taken by the Commons, when it was proposed, in the session of 1694-5, to renew certain temporary statutes, to strike out this particular statute from the list. The Lords dissented, and re-inserted it. The Commons refused to accept the amendment. A conference of both Houses took place, Clarke of Chipley being the leading manager on the part of the Commons, and the result was that the Lords waived their objections. The paper of reasons tendered by the Commons' managers on this occasion is said, by a writer in the *Craftsman* for November 20th,

1731, to have been drawn up by Locke. As Clarke was one of his most intimate friends, and as the Reasons correspond pretty closely with a paper of criticisms on the Act written by Locke, this statement is probably true, so far at least as concerns their substance. The arguments employed are mainly practical, consisting of objections in detail, and pointing out inconveniences, financial and otherwise, which resulted from the operation of the Act. But these arguments, "suited to the capacity of the parliamentary majority," did, as Macaulay has remarked, what Milton's *Areopagitica* had failed to do, and a vote, "of which the history can be but imperfectly traced in the Journals of the House, has done more for liberty and for civilization than the Great Charter or the Bill of Rights." Locke's paper of criticisms, which is published *in extenso* in *Lord King's Life*, asks very pertinently, "why a man should not have liberty to print whatever he would speak, and be answerable for the one, just as he is for the other, if he transgresses the law in either." He then offers a suggestion, to take the place of the licensing provisions:—"Let the printer or bookseller be answerable for whatever is against law in the book, as if he were the author, unless he can produce the person he had it from, which is all the restraint ought to be upon printing." It appears from this paper that the monopoly of the Stationers' Company had become so oppressive that books printed in London could be bought cheaper at Amsterdam than in St. Paul's Church Yard. Except for the few monopolists, the book-trade had been ruined in England. But then, he reflects, "our ecclesiastical laws seldom favour trade, and he that reads this Act with attention will find it upse" (that is, highly) "ecclesiastical."

This question had hardly been settled before Locke had

another opportunity of influencing legislation on a subject which absorbed much of his interest, and on which he had already employed his pen. Probably at no time in the history of our country has the condition of the coinage become so burning a question, or caused such wide-spread distress, as in the years immediately succeeding the Revolution. To understand the monetary difficulties occasioned by clipping the coin, it must be remembered that, at the time of which I am speaking, two kinds of silver money (if we neglect the imperfectly milled money which was executed between 1561 and 1663) were in circulation, hammered money with unmarked rims, and what was called milled money, from being made in a coining-mill, with a legend on the rim of the larger and graining on the rim of the smaller pieces. The latter kind of coins, too, had the additional advantage of being almost perfectly circular, while the shape of the former was almost always more or less irregular. The hammered money, it is plain, could be easily clipped or pared, whereas the milling was an absolute protection against this mode of fraud. Though milling, in much its present form, had been introduced into our mint in the year 1663, and then became the exclusive mode of coining, the old hammered money still continued to be legal tender; and, as the milled money was always worth its weight in silver, and the hammered money was generally current at something much above its intrinsic worth, the milled money was naturally melted down or exported abroad, leaving the hammered money in almost exclusive possession of the field. The milled money disappeared almost as fast as it was coined, and the hammered money was clipped and pared more and more, till it was often not worth half or even a third of the sum for which it passed. At Oxford, indeed, a hundred pounds' worth

of the current silver money, which ought to have weighed four hundred ounces, was found to weigh only a hundred and sixteen. Every month the state of things was becoming worse and worse. The cost of commodities was constantly rising, and every payment of any amount involved endless altercations. In a bargain not only had the price of the article to be settled, but also the value of the money in which it was to be paid. A guinea, which at one place counted for only twenty-two shillings, would at another fetch thirty, and might have brought far more, had not the Government fixed that sum as the maximum at which it would be taken in the payment of taxes. Thus, all commercial transactions had become disarranged, no one knew what he was really worth, or what any commodity might cost him a few months hence. Macaulay, who has given a most graphic description of the financial condition of the country at this time, hardly exaggerates when he says, "It may be doubted whether all the misery which had been inflicted on the English nation in a quarter of a century by bad kings, bad ministers, bad parliaments, and bad judges, was equal to the misery caused in a single year by bad crowns and bad shillings." Almost from the moment of his return to England, Locke had felt the gravest anxiety on this subject. "When at my lodgings in London," says Lady Masham, speaking of the time immediately succeeding the revolution, "the company there, finding him often afflicted about a matter which nobody else took any notice of, have rallied him upon this uneasiness as being a visionary trouble, he has more than once replied, 'We might laugh at it, but it would not be long before we should want money to send our servants to market with for bread and meat,' which was so true, five or six years after, that there was not a

family in England who did not find this a difficulty." The letter on "Some Considerations of the Consequences of Lowering of Interest and Raising the Value of Money," the latter part of which dealt with this question, is dated as early as November 7, 1691, and had been, in the main, as he tells us, put into writing about twelve months before. Here he not only points out the intolerable character of the grievances under which the nation was labouring, but also protests most emphatically against one of the proposed methods of remedying them, namely, "raising the value of money," as it was called; that is, depreciating the intrinsic value of the money coined, or raising the denomination, so, for instance, as to put into a crown-piece or a shilling, when coined, less than the customary amount of silver. To the consideration of this scheme, which at one time found much favour, we shall soon see that he had occasion to recur. Universal as were the complaints about the existing state of things, no active measures, if we except wholesale and frequent hangings for "clipping the coin," and increased measures of vigilance for the purpose of detecting the delinquents, were taken for stopping the evil, until the year 1695. Under the malign ascendancy of Danby, the Government had other views and objects than to ameliorate the condition of the people. But, in the years 1694 and 1695, other and more enlightened statesmen were gradually winning their way into the royal councils, or beginning to occupy a more important position in them. For at this period, we must recollect, the high officers of state were not all, as now, necessarily of one uniform political pattern. In April, 1694, immediately after the establishment of the Bank of England, Charles Montague, afterwards Lord Halifax, one of the greatest of English financiers, had been made Chancellor of the Exchequer

And, on occasion of the king's departure for the Continent in May, 1695, two of Locke's most intimate friends, Lord Keeper Somers and the Earl of Pembroke, were nominated among the seven Lords Justices, who were to govern the kingdom during William's absence. To discerning and judicious statesmen like Somers and Montague it must have been quite apparent that the penal laws for protecting the coinage were altogether inadequate to the purpose. The gains to be made were so large and so easily obtained, that men were ready to run the risk of the punishment. And, moreover, even if the crime were detected, the punishment was by no means certain or unattended with sympathy. Great as were the suffering and inconveniences inflicted on the people by these practices, the punishment of death appeared to many to be in excess of the offence. Juries were often unwilling to convict, and the disgrace incurred by the criminal was very different from that which attended the murderer or the ordinary thief. That wise financial legislation, and not the more stringent execution of the penal laws, was the true and only effectual mode of eradicating the disease, was at length recognized by the Government, and the new Lords Justices soon set about to devise the remedy. To Locke, who was well known to have been the author of the pamphlet which appeared on the subject in 1692, they naturally turned for advice. In the early part of October, while the king was on his way back from his successful campaign in the Netherlands, he was summoned up from Oates to confer with them. Writing to Molyneux the next month, and informing him of the fact, he adds with characteristic modesty: "This is too publicly known here to make the mentioning of it to you appear vanity in me." Notwithstanding the subordinate part which Locke here seems to

assign to himself, there can be no doubt that his share in the measures of the Government, as ultimately matured, was a principal, if not the principal, one. That legislative measures would now be taken, there was no longer any question. But the danger of which Locke was chiefly afraid, was the raising the denomination of the coin, or, in other words, the legalized depreciation of the currency, a scheme against which he had formerly protested, and which was now officially recommended to the Government by one of their own subordinates, William Lowndes. Orders had been given to Lowndes, who, after many years of good service in a subordinate capacity, had recently been appointed Secretary to the Treasury, to collect statistics relating to the monetary condition of the country, and to report on the most practicable methods of re-coining the current silver money. In executing the former part of his task, he left no doubt as to the necessity of speedily applying some remedy. The silver coins brought into the exchequer during three months of 1695 ought to have weighed 221,418 ounces. Their actual weight was 113,771 ounces, or barely over one-half. In consequence of the vitiating, diminishing, and counterfeiting of the current moneys, he says, "it is come to pass that great contentions do daily arise amongst the king's subjects in fairs, markets, shops, and other places throughout the kingdom, about the passing and refusing of the same, to the great disturbance of the public peace. Many bargains, doings, and dealings are totally prevented and laid aside, which lessens trade in general." The necessity of setting the price of commodities according to the value of the money to be received, is, he considers, "one great cause of raising the price, not only of merchandise, but even of edibles and other necessaries for the

sustenance of the common people, to their great grievance." So far, his political economy was perfectly sound, but, when he comes to discuss the question of re-coinage, he advocates, without any misgiving, a scheme for the depreciation of the currency to the extent of one-fifth. A crown-piece was henceforth to count as 6*s.* 3*d.*, and the nominal value of half-crowns, shillings, and sixpences was to be raised proportionately. Locke, with his clearer mind, saw, of course, that this would only be for the state to do systematically and by law the very same thing for which the clippers were being hanged. It would be to legalize the disarrangement of all monetary transactions, and to deprive every creditor of one-fifth of his debts. Montague and Somers were as clear on this point as he was, and Somers at once urged him to reply. Locke had returned to Oates, in consequence of the sudden death of Mrs. Cudworth, on the 16th of November, and at once set about his answer.

This tract, which formed a pamphlet of more than a hundred pages, was submitted to the Lords Justices, printed, and published before the end of December. It was entitled, *Further Considerations concerning Raising the Value of Money*, and simplified and enforced the arguments contained in a previous pamphlet which Locke had also drawn up for the use of the Lords Justices earlier in the year, under the title, *Some Observations on a Printed Paper, entitled, For Encouraging the Coining Silver money in England, and after for keeping it here.* Meanwhile, Montague had, under the sanction of a committee of the whole House, introduced his resolutions into the House of Commons, and there can be little doubt that, in drawing up these, he and the Lords Justices had been assisted by Locke. Any way, the resolutions

embodied in the main the opinions which Locke had been so instrumental in impressing on those in authority. The old standard value of the silver pieces was to be retained both as to weight and fineness, the point for which he had fought so persistently. The clipped pieces were, after a certain day, only to be received in payment of taxes, or in loans to the exchequer; after a further day, they were to cease to be legal tender altogether. All the hammered money, as it came into the mint in payment of loans or taxes, was to be re-coined as milled money, and the loss to be borne by the Exchequer. When the resolution that the old standard was to be retained was put to the House, it was challenged, and an amendment moved by those who were of Lowndes' opinion, that the word "both" be omitted. On a division, there were 225 for retaining the word, and 114 against. The House, thus, by a large majority, affirmed what all economists would now regard as an elementary principle of finance. A Bill embodying the resolution was soon passed, but, in consequence of difficulties with the Lords, had to be dropped. A fresh Bill was introduced on the 13th of January, substantially embodying the same provisions as the old Bill, and was hurried through its various stages so fast, that it received the Royal Assent on the 21st of January, 1695-6. Up to the 4th of May, 1696, the clipped money was to be received in payment of taxes, and up to the 24th of June, for loans or other payments into the Exchequer. But after the 10th of February ensuing, it was to cease to be legal tender in ordinary payments. Thus, in spite of much temporary inconvenience caused by the scarcity of money during the time of transition, the silver coinage of the country was, once for all, put upon a sound basis. Late as Locke's pamphlet appeared, it probably helped to

facilitate the passage of the Bill through the two Houses, as the reiterated statement of his opinions had undoubtedly contributed in very large measure to shape and confirm the action of the government. It may be mentioned that the loss to the Exchequer, estimated as 1,200,000*l.*, was made up by the imposition of a house tax and window tax, the former of which still continues, while the latter existed within the memory of many men now only of middle age.

Great as is the debt which philosophy owes to Locke's *Essay*, constitutional theory to his treatises on government, the freedom of religious speculation to his Letters on Toleration, and the ways of "sweet reasonableness" to all these, and indeed to all his works, it would form a nice subject of discussion whether mankind at large has not been more benefited by the share which he took in practical reforms than by his literary productions. It would undoubtedly be too much to affirm that, without his initiative or assistance, the state of the coinage would never have been reformed, the monopoly of the Stationers' Company abolished, or the shackles of the Licensing Act struck off. But had it not been for his clearness of vision, and the persistence of his philanthropic efforts, these measures might have been indefinitely retarded or clogged with provisos and compromises which might have robbed them of more than half their effects. A generation ago it was the fashion in many circles to speak contemptuously of the writers and statesmen of William's reign, and even now but scant and grudging justice is often done to them. The admirers of mystical philosophy and romantic politics may, however, fairly be challenged to show that their heroes, whether in letters or action, have borne equal fruit with the vigorous understanding

and plain, direct, practical common-sense of men like Halifax, Somers, and Locke.

It has already been stated that soon after his return to England Locke was appointed a Commissioner of Appeals, a post which, though not entirely without duties, seems to have taken up but little of his time. One of his letters to Clarke shows the difficulty of forming a quorum, and perhaps illustrates the fact that when the duties of an office are slight, they are generally neglected altogether. But towards the end of the year 1695 the government, now virtually under the leadership of Somers, determined to revive the council of trade and plantations of which, it will be recollected, Locke had been Secretary when Shaftesbury's counsels were in the ascendant at the court of Charles II., as far back as the year 1673. At first there were some difficulties with the king, but ultimately, on the 15th of May, 1696, he was induced to issue the patent appointing and defining the duties of a commission. Besides the great officers of state, there were to be certain paid commissioners, with a salary of 1000*l.* a year, of whom Locke was one. His name was inserted in the first draft of the commission without his express consent, and he appears, as we can well understand, to have accepted the office only with extreme reluctance. Writing to Molyneux, who had congratulated him on the appointment, he says with evident sincerity :—

"Your congratulation I take as you meant, kindly and seriously, and, it may be, it is what another would rejoice in; but 'tis a preferment I shall get nothing by, and I know not whether my country will, though that I shall aim at with all my endeavours. Riches may be instrumental to so many good purposes that it is, I think, vanity rather than religion or philosophy to

pretend to contemn them. But yet they may be purchased too dear. My age and health demand a retreat from bustle and business, and the pursuit of some inquiries I have in my thoughts makes it more desirable than any of those rewards which public employments tempt people with. I think the little I have enough, and do not desire to live higher or die richer than I am. And therefore you have reason rather to pity the folly, than congratulate the fortune, that engages me in the whirlpool."

The duties of the commission could hardly have been more widely defined than they were. It was to be at once a Board of Trade, a Poor-Law Board, and a Colonial Office. The commissioners were to inquire into the general condition of trade in the country, both internal and external, and "to consider by what means the several useful and profitable manufactures already settled in the kingdom may be further improved; and how, and in what manner, new and profitable manufactures may be introduced." They were also "to consider of some proper methods for setting on work and employing the poor of the kingdom, and making them useful to the public, and thereby easing our subjects of that burthen." Finally, they were to inform themselves of the present condition of the plantations, as the colonies were then called, not only in relation to commerce, but also to the administration of government and justice, as well as to suggest means of rendering them more useful to the mother country, especially in the supply of naval stores. Here, surely, was work enough for men far younger and more vigorous than Locke, but, having undertaken the duties of the office, he appears in no way to have spared himself. In the summer and autumn months he resided in London, and attended the meetings of the board personally, often day after day, and in the evening as well as the day-time.

In the winter and spring his health compelled him to reside at Oates, but he was constantly sending up long minutes for the use of his colleagues. Mr. Fox Bourne, who has been carefully through the proceedings of the commission, informs us that Locke was altogether its presiding genius. He was a member of this board a little over four years, having been compelled by increasing ill-health, or, as the minutes of the council put it, "finding his health more and more impaired by the air of this city," to resign on the 28th of June, 1700. The king, we are told by Lady Masham, was most unwilling to receive his resignation, "telling him that, were his attendance ever so small, he was sensible his continuance in the commission would be useful to him, and that he did not desire he should be one day in town on that account to the prejudice of his health." Locke, however, was too conscientious to retain a place with large emoluments, of which he felt that he could no longer perform the duties to his own satisfaction. It is interesting to find that his successor was Matthew Prior, the poet.

When we have seen the wide powers of the commission, we hardly need feel surprise that its business was multifarious. It at once set to work to collect evidence of the state of trade in the colonies, of our commercial relations with foreign ports, of the condition of the linen and paper manufactures at home, of the number of paupers in the kingdom, and the mode of their relief, as well as to devise means for increasing the woollen trade and preventing the exportation of wool. Locke was specially commissioned "to draw up a scheme of some method of determining differences between merchants by referees that might be decisive without appeal." In the winter of 1696-7, finding that his work followed him to Oates, and being then

apparently in a feebler state of health than usual, he made an ineffectual attempt to escape from his new employment, but Somers refused to hand in his resignation to the king. From a letter to Molyneux we find that it was not simply his ill-health, but the "corruption of the age," which made him averse to continuing in office. And we can well understand how troublesome, and apparently hopeless, it must have been to deal with the various threatened interests of that time, when monopolies, patents, and pensions were regarded by the governing classes almost as a matter of course.

In the summer of 1697 the principal subject which engaged the attention of the commission was the best means of discouraging the Irish woollen manufacture, and of, at the same time, encouraging the Irish linen manufacture. Each commissioner was invited to bring up a separate report. Three did so. Locke's was the one selected, and, with slight alterations, was signed by the other commissioners on the 31st of August, and forwarded almost immediately afterwards to the Lords Justices. This interesting state-document proceeds entirely upon the notions of protection to native industries which were then almost universally current among statesmen and merchants. The problems were to secure to England the monopoly of what was then regarded as its peculiar and appropriate manufacture, the woollen trade, and to assign to Ireland, in return for the restrictions imposed upon her, some compensating branch of industry. According to the ideas then commonly prevalent the scheme was perfectly equitable to both countries. But, naturally, the interests of England are put in the foreground. The interests of the Irish people, however, were not to be neglected, and what Locke doubtless conceived as full com-

pensation was to be given them for the loss of their woollen trade. "And since it generally proves ineffectual, and we conceive it hard to endeavour to drive men from the trade they are employed in by bare prohibition, without offering them at the same time some other trade which, if they please, may turn to account, we humbly propose that the linen manufacture be set on foot, and so encouraged in Ireland as may make it the general trade of that country as effectually as the woollen manufacture is, and must be, of England." Linen cloth and all other manufactures made of flax or hemp, without any mixture of wool, were to be exported to all places duty free, as indeed had already been provided by Act of Parliament with regard to England. One method by which Locke proposed to encourage the linen manufacture in Ireland runs so counter to modern notions with regard both to the education of the poor and to freedom of employment, that it may be interesting to the reader to see the suggestion at length:—

"And, because the poorest earning in the several parts of the linen manufacture is at present in the work of the spinners, who therefore need the greatest encouragement, and ought to be increased as much as possible, that therefore spinning schools be set up in such places and at such distances as the directors shall appoint, where whoever will come to learn to spin shall be taught gratis, and to which all persons that have not forty shillings a year estate shall be obliged to send all their children, both male and female, that they have at home with them, from six to fourteen years of age, and may have liberty to send those also between four and six if they please, to be employed there in spinning ten hours in the day when the days are so long, or as long as it is light when they are shorter; provided always that no child shall be obliged to go above two miles to any such school."

Then there follow many other minute and paternal

regulations of the same kind, the object of which was to turn the whole Irish nation into spinners, and to supply with linen not only "the whole kingdom of England," but foreign markets as well. The Irish authorities, however, were meanwhile preparing a scheme of their own, and, after controversies between the English and Irish officials, extending over more than two years, Locke's plan was finally laid aside in favour of that of Louis Crommelin. Besides the attempt to monopolize the woollen trade for England and the linen trade for Ireland, much of the time of the Council was devoted to schemes for the protection of native industries, by forbidding or throwing obstacles in the way of importation and exportation. But Locke and his colleagues were here only following the track marked out for them by the ordinary opinion of the time.

The main subject which occupied the attention of the Council in the autumn of 1697 was the employment of the idle or necessitous poor. From the beginning of its sessions, it had been collecting evidence on this subject, and, in September of this year, it was decided that each commissioner should draw up a scheme of reform, to be submitted to the Council. As had been the case with his report on the Irish linen manufacture, Locke's was the one selected. From a variety of causes, however, his suggestions were never carried into effect, and the various efforts of William's Government to deal with the gigantic problem of pauperism proved abortive.

Locke's paper of suggestions assumes as a datum what was always regarded at this time as an axiom of poor-law legislation, namely, that it is the duty of each individual parish to maintain and employ its own poor, having, as a set-off, the right of coercing the able-bodied to work. Pernicious and partial as this principle was, we should

have more occasion for surprise if we found Locke contravening it than conforming to it. The merit of his paper is that it offers excellent suggestions for minimizing the evils necessarily attaching to the system then in vogue. The recent growth of pauperism he refers to "relaxation of discipline and corruption of manners, virtue and industry being as constant companions on the one side as vice and idleness are on the other. The first step, therefore," he continues, "towards the setting of the poor on work ought to be a restraint of their debauchery by a strict execution of the laws provided against it, more particularly by the suppression of superfluous brandy-shops and unnecessary ale-houses, especially in country parishes not lying upon great roads." He then proposes a series of provisions, sufficiently stringent, for the purpose of compelling the idle and able-bodied poor to work, stating that, upon a very moderate computation, above one half of those who receive relief from the parishes are able to earn their own livelihood. In maritime counties, all those not physically or mentally incapacitated, who were found begging out of their own parish without a pass, were to be compelled to serve on board one of his Majesty's ships, under strict discipline, for three years. In the inland counties, all those so found begging were to be sent to the nearest house of correction for a like period. But, besides the able-bodied paupers, there were a great number not absolutely unable or unwilling to do something for their livelihood, and yet prevented by age or circumstances from wholly earning their own living. For these he proposes to find employment in the woollen or other manufactures, so as, at all events, to diminish the cost of their maintenance to the public, and at the same time increase the industrial resources of the country. One of the most

distinctive features of Locke's scheme was the proposal to set up working-schools for spinning or knitting, or some other industrial occupation, in each parish, "to which the children of all such as demand relief of the parish, above three and under fourteen years of age, whilst they live at home with their parents, and are not otherwise employed for their livelihood by the allowance of the overseers of the poor, shall be obliged to come." The children were to be fed at school, and this mode of relief was to take the place of the existing allowance in money paid to a father who had a large number of children, which, we are not surprised to learn, was frequently spent in the ale-house, whilst those for whose benefit it was given were left to perish for want of necessaries. The food of the children of the poor at that time, we are told, was seldom more than bread and water, and often there was a very scanty supply of that. Another advantage which Locke proposed to effect by the institution of these schools was the moral and religious instruction of the children. They would be obliged to come constantly to church every Sunday, along with their schoolmasters or dames, "whereby they would be brought into some sense of religion, whereas ordinarily now, in their idle and loose way of bringing up, they are as utter strangers both to religion and morality as they are to industry." One further provision of this scheme may be noticed, as offering some mitigation of the parochial system of relief which then obtained, namely, "that in all cities and towns corporate the poor's tax be not levied by distinct parishes, but by one equal tax throughout the whole corporation."

The anxiety of the king to retain Locke on the Commission has already been mentioned. It would appear that they were in not infrequent conference, and we know

that the king entertained a very high opinion both of his integrity and of his political capacity. A good deal of mystery attaches to one of their interviews, but the explanation of it proffered by Mr. Fox Bourne possesses, at any rate, considerable plausibility. One bitter January morning, in the winter of 1697-8, while Locke was at Oates, he received a pressing summons from the king to repair to Kensington. He was at the time suffering more than ordinarily from the bronchial affection to which he was constantly subject, and Lady Masham attempted to dissuade him from running the risk of the journey, but in vain. When he returned, the only account that he would give of the interview was that "the king had a desire to talk with him about his own health, as believing that there was much similitude in their cases." It appears, however, from a letter addressed by Locke to Somers a few days after his return to Oates, that the king had offered him some important employment, and that he had excused himself on the ground of his weak health, and his inexperience in that kind of business, the business being such as required "skill in dealing with men in their various humours, and drawing out their secrets." Mr. Fox Bourne forms the reasonable conjecture that Locke had been asked to go as right-hand man to William Bentinck, Earl of Portland, who had just been nominated as special ambassador to the Court of France. The peace of Ryswick had been ratified in the previous November, and the mission to Louis XIV. was, of course, one requiring great tact and sagacity. William had strongly urged Locke, some years before, to represent him on another very important mission, the one to the Elector of Brandenburg, and it may be that, on the present occasion, no fitter person occurred to him. Any way, the employment was

one which would have advanced Locke in riches and honour; but as such, glad as he might have been to serve his country disinterestedly to the best of his power, it had no attractions for him. "He must have a heart strongly touched with wealth or honours who, at my age, and labouring for breath, can find any great relish for either of them."

On one occasion Locke accompanied the king, the latter going *incognito*, to a meeting of the Society of Friends, where they listened to the famous Quaker preacheress, Rebecca Collier. Locke afterwards sent her a parcel of sweetmeats, with a very complimentary letter, and is said to have found the meeting so agreeable that it removed his objections to a female ministry.

With his resignation of the Commissionership of the Board of Trade, in the summer of 1700, Locke's public life comes to an end. His friend Somers had been sacrificed to the incessant and malignant attacks of the Tories, and dismissed from the Chancellorship, in the previous spring, and to those statesmen who were inspired by a sincere and simple desire for the well-being of their country, the political outlook had become anything but cheerful. The condition of Locke's health was quite a sufficient reason for his desiring to be relieved of the anxieties of office; but we can hardly doubt that, on other grounds as well, he was glad to escape from so intricate a maze as the field of politics bade fair soon to become.

CHAPTER VII.

CONTROVERSY WITH STILLINGFLEET—OTHER LITERARY OCCUPATIONS—DOMESTIC LIFE—PETER KING—LATTER YEARS—DEATH.

In order to resume the thread of Locke's literary and domestic life, it is now necessary to go back two or three years. I have already spoken of no less than three literary controversies in which he found himself engaged, one on financial, and two on religious questions. Of the latter, one was occasioned by the publication of the *Letter on Toleration*, the other by that of the *Reasonableness of Christianity*. The *Essay* also had been attacked by Norris and other writers, including one very acute antagonist, John Serjeant, or Sergeant, a Roman Catholic priest, but to these critics Locke did not see fit to reply. The strictures on Norris only appear among his posthumous works. But in the autumn of 1696 Stillingfleet, Bishop of Worcester, in his *Discourse in Vindication of the Doctrine of the Trinity*, pointedly drew attention to the principles of the *Essay*, as favouring anti-Trinitarian doctrine. Stillingfleet's position and reputation appeared to demand an answer, and before the year, according to the old style, was out, Locke's *Letter to the Bishop of Worcester* was published. The Bishop's Answer, Locke's Reply to the Answer, and the Bishop's "Answer to Mr.

Locke's Second Letter, wherein his notion of ideas is proved to be inconsistent with itself, and with the articles of the Christian faith," all followed, one on the other, within a few months. The last letter of the series is "Mr. Locke's Reply to the Bishop of Worcester's Answer to his Second Letter," published in 1699. Stillingfleet died soon after the publication of this pamphlet, and thus the voluminous controversy came to an end. There can be no doubt that the antagonists were unequally matched. Stillingfleet was clumsy both in handling and argument, and constantly misrepresented or exaggerated the statements of his adversary. On the other hand Locke, notwithstanding an unnecessary prolixity which wearies the modern reader, shows admirable skill and temper. He deals tenderly with his victim, as if he loved him, but, none the less, never fails to despatch him with a mortal stab. Stillingfleet, indeed, was no metaphysician, and not very much of a logician. He did not see at all clearly where the orthodox doctrines were affected, and where they remained unaffected, by Locke's philosophy, and he no doubt considerably exaggerated the bearing of Locke's direct statements upon them. At the same time, it is impossible to deny that his instincts were perfectly sound in apprehending grave dangers to the current theological opinions, and still more, perhaps, to the established mode of expressing them, from the "new way of ideas." Religious, and even devout, as are those portions of the *Essay* in which Locke has occasion expressly to mention the leading principles of the Christian faith, yet his handling of many of the metaphysical terms and notions which modern divines, whether Catholic or Protestant, had taken on trust from their predecessors, the fathers and schoolmen, was well calculated to alarm those who had

the interests of theological orthodoxy at heart. The playful freedom with which he discusses the idea of substance seemed, not unreasonably, to strike at the terminology of the Athanasian Creed, while, most unreasonably, his resolution of personal identity into present and recollected states of consciousness appeared inconsistent with the doctrine of the Resurrection of the Dead. A far more powerful solvent, however, of the unreflecting and complacent orthodoxy, into which established churches, and, in fact, all prosperous religious communities, are apt to lapse, was to be found in the general drift and tendency rather than in the individual tenets of Locke's philosophy. And this fact, though only very dimly and confusedly, Stillingfleet appears to have seen. To insist that words shall always stand for determinate ideas, to attempt to trace ideas to their original sources, and to propose to discriminate between the certainty and varying probabilities of our beliefs, according to the nature of the evidence on which they rest, is to encourage a state of mind diametrically the opposite of that which humbly and thankfully accepts the words of the religious teacher, without doubt and without inquiry. To the religious teacher whose own beliefs rest on no previous inquiry, who has never acquired "a reason for the faith that is in him," such a state of mind must necessarily be not only inconvenient but repulsive, and hence we have no right to feel surprised when an attempt is made to expose it to popular odium, or to fasten on those who entertain it injurious or opprobrious epithets. The old-standing feud, of which Plato speaks, between poetry and philosophy, has in great measure been transferred, in these latter times, to philosophy and theology. But, in both cases, the antagonism is an unnecessary one. The highest art is compatible

with the most profound speculation. And so we may venture to hope that the simple love of truth, combined with the charity "which never faileth," will lead men not further away from the Divine presence, but nearer to, and into it.

Here I thankfully take leave of the mass of controversial literature, in the writing of which so much of Locke's latter life was spent. The controversies were not of his own seeking, and, from all that we know of his temper and character, must have been as distasteful to him as they are wearisome to us. But prolonged and reiterated controversy was of the habit of the time, and no man who cared candidly and unreservedly to express his opinions on any important question could hope to escape from it.

In the autumn of 1697, while the controversy with Stillingfleet was at its hottest, Locke wrote to Molyneux: —"I had much rather be at leisure to make some additions to my book of Education and my Essay on Human Understanding, than be employed to defend myself against the groundless, and, as others think, trifling quarrel of the bishop." He was at this time engaged on preparing the fourth edition of the *Essay* for the press. In addition to this task, or rather as part of it, he was also employing himself on writing the admirable little tract on the Conduct of the Understanding, the contents of which I shall notice in a subsequent chapter. This treatise, which was not published till after his death, was originally intended as an additional chapter to the *Essay*. Speaking of it in one of his letters to Molyneux, he says:—"I have written several pages on this subject; but the matter, the farther I go, opens the more upon me, and I cannot yet get sight of any end of it. The title of the chapter will be 'Of the

Conduct of the Understanding,' which, if I shall pursue as far as I imagine it will reach, and as it deserves, will, I conclude, make the largest chapter of my Essay." It did not, however, appear in the new edition, nor did Locke ever reduce its parts into order, or put the finishing stroke to it. He may, perhaps, have intended to revise it for a subsequent edition of the *Essay*, but the fourth was the last which appeared during his lifetime.

Before speaking of the literary labours which occupied the last years of Locke's life, I may here conveniently recur to his domestic history. Of his quiet life with the Mashams little more need be said. Had Lady Masham been his daughter, she could not have tended him more carefully or lovingly, and had he been her father, he could not have entertained a more sincere solicitude for the welfare of her and her family. All Locke's friends were welcome at Oates, and seem to have been regarded quite as much as friends of the Mashams as of his own. And Oates appears in every respect to have been as much Locke's home as that of its owners. In the whole of his correspondence, there does not appear the slightest trace of those petty piques and annoyances, those small *désagréments*, which are so apt to grow up among people who live much together, even when, at bottom, they entertain a deep love and admiration for each other. On the side of the Mashams we know that the tide of affection ran equally smooth. Lady Masham and Esther acted as his nurses, and with one or other of them he seems to have shared all his pursuits. The intimacy and sweetness of these relations surely imply as rare an amount of amiability of temper and power of winning regard on the one side as of patience and devotion on the other. But then Locke possessed the inestimable

gift of cheerfulness, which renders even the invalid's chamber a joy to those who enter it. All the glimpses we obtain of the life at Oates represent it as a gay and pleasant one, none the less gay and pleasant because its enjoyments were modest and rational. After complaining to Molyneux of the persistent asthma which confined him a close prisoner to the house during the winter of 1697-8, he adds, "I wish nevertheless that you were here with me to see how well I am; for you would find that, sitting by the fireside, I could bear my part in discoursing, laughing, and being merry with you, as well as ever I could in my life. If you were here (and, if wishes of more than one could bring you, you would be here to-day) you would find three or four in the parlour after dinner, who, you would say, passed their afternoons as agreeably and as jocundly as any people you have this good while met with." Locke's conversation is reported to have been peculiarly fascinating. He had a large stock of stories, and is said to have had a singularly easy and humorous way of telling them.

Among the more frequent guests at Oates at this time were Edward Clarke and his daughter Betty, Locke's "little wife," now fast growing up to womanhood, a son of Limborch, and a son of Benjamin Furly, both engaged in mercantile pursuits in London, and a young kinsman of Locke's own, Peter King, of whom I shall have more to say presently. One of the most anxiously expected guests, whose visits had been often promised and often deferred, was the correspondent of whom we have heard so much, William Molyneux. At length, after the rising of the British Parliament in the summer of 1698, the two friends met. Even on this occasion, Molyneux had been obliged to defer his promised visit for some weeks, on

account of a recent trouble which he had brought on himself by the publication of a "home-rule" pamphlet, protesting against the interference of the English Parliament in Irish affairs. Both Houses had joined in an address to the king, praying for punishment on the offender, but the king, possibly through Locke's intervention, had wisely taken no notice of the petition. Any way, after the prorogation, Molyneux seems to have felt sufficiently secure to venture on a journey across the channel. He and Locke were together for some time both in London and at Oates. The friends, though they had been in such constant and intimate correspondence for six years, had never met before. We may easily imagine how warm was their greeting, how much they had to talk about, and how loath they were to separate. "I will venture to assert to you," wrote Molyneux on his return to Dublin, "that I cannot recollect, through the whole course of my life, such signal instances of real friendship, as when I had the happiness of your company for five weeks together in London. That part thereof especially which I passed at Oates has made such an agreeable impression on my mind that nothing can be more pleasing." Shortly after writing this letter, Molyneux died at the early age of forty-two. "His worth and his friendship to me," writes Locke in a letter to Burridge, the Latin translator of the *Essay*, "made him an inestimable treasure, which I must regret the loss of the little remainder of my life, without any hopes of repairing it any way." He then characteristically goes on to ask if there is any service he can render to Molyneux's son. "They who have the care of him cannot do me a greater pleasure than to give me the opportunity to show that my friendship died not with his father." One of the most amiable and attractive traits in Locke's character is the

eagerness which he always displayed in advising, encouraging, or helping forward the sons of his friends. Any opportunity of doing so always gave him the most evident satisfaction, as, from his correspondence, we see in the case of Frank Masham, the two young Furlys, young Limborch, and numerous others.

I must now no longer delay the introduction to the reader of Locke's young cousin, Peter King. Locke had an uncle, Peter Locke, whose daughter Anne had married Jeremy King, a grocer and salter in a substantial way of business at Exeter. Such a marriage was not necessarily any disparagement to Anne Locke's family, as the present line of demarcation between professional men and the smaller gentry, on the one side, and substantial retail tradesmen, on the other, hardly existed at that time. They had a son, Peter, born in 1669, who was consequently Locke's first cousin once removed. The boy seems for some time to have been employed in his father's business, but he had a voracious appetite for books, and showed a decided talent for the acquisition of learning. Locke, on one of his visits to Exeter, discovered these qualities, and persuaded Peter King's parents to allow him to change his mode of life, and study for one of the learned professions. Whether he went to any English school does not appear; but, during Locke's stay in Holland, he resided for some time in the University of Leyden. His studies there embraced at least classics, theology, and law; and when he returned to England, apparently in 1690, he brought back with him a pamphlet entitled, *An Enquiry into the Constitution and Discipline of the Primitive Church*. As in this treatise he maintained that Presbyterianism was the original form of Church government, he probably never had any serious intention, notwithstanding his theological

proclivities, of entering holy orders in the Established Church. Any way, in October, 1694, he was entered a student of the Middle Temple, and in Trinity Term, 1698, he was called to the Bar. During his residence in London as a law student, he must have been frequently at Oates, and Locke must have frequently visited him in his chambers in the Temple. The first extant letter from Locke to King, dated June 27th, 1698, at any rate assumes intimacy and frequency of intercourse. "Your company here had been ten times welcomer than any the best excuse you could send; but you may now pretend to be a man of business, and there can be nothing said to you." Very sound was the advice with which the elder relative concluded his letter to the young barrister: "When you first open your mouth at the bar, it should be in some easy plain matter that you are perfectly master of." King's success in his profession was very rapid, and he soon became one of the most popular counsel on the Western Circuit. In the general election of 1700 he attained one of the first objects of ambition at which a rising young barrister generally aims—a seat in the House of Commons. Owing, probably, to his cousin's influence with the Whig leaders, he was returned for the small borough of Beer Alston, in Devonshire, which he continued to represent in several successive Parliaments. Locke, writing to him shortly before the meeting of Parliament, entreats him not to go circuit, as he had intended to do, but to devote himself at once to his Parliamentary duties. "I am sure there was never so critical a time, when every honest member of Parliament ought to watch his trust, and that you will see before the end of the next vacation." The loss to his pocket, his good relative intimates, delicately enough, shall be amply made up to

him. King took his cousin's advice on this point, but, fortunately and wisely, did not take it on another. "My advice to you is not to speak at all in the house for some time, whatever fair opportunity you may seem to have." King was advised to communicate his "light or apprehensions" to some "honest speaker," who might make use of them for him. Locke, we must remember, was now becoming old, and though not, like many old men, jealous of his juniors, he could not escape the infirmity of all old men, that of exaggerating the youthfulness of youth, and so of insisting too stringently on the modesty becoming those in whom he was interested. King broke the ice soon after the meeting of Parliament, and Locke had the prudence and good-nature to show no resentment at his advice having been neglected. His cousin, however, never became a great Parliamentary speaker; but he soon gained a reputation for being a thoroughly sound lawyer and a thoroughly honest man. He rose successively to be Recorder of London, Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, and Lord High Chancellor of England. He was also ennobled as Lord King of Ockham, and, by a very curious coincidence, his four sons in succession bore the same title. To one of his descendants, his great-grandson, also named Peter, we owe the publication of many documents and letters connected with Locke, and the biography so well known as *Lord King's Life of Locke*. The present representative of the family, and the direct descendant in the male line of Peter King, is the Earl of Lovelace. As Peter King was, to all intents, Locke's adopted son, we may thus regard Locke as the founder of an illustrious line in the English peerage, and there are certainly few, if any, of our ennobled families who can point to a founder whose name is so likely to be the heritage of all future ages.

King kept Locke well posted in all that went on in parliament, and seems also to have been a constant visitor at Oates. Soon after his election, Sir Francis Masham had considerately proposed to Locke that his cousin should "steal down sometimes with him on Saturday, and return on Monday." On one of these occasions, in the Easter holidays of 1701, King was accompanied by young Lord Ashley, now become the third Earl of Shaftesbury. Locke had then surmounted his winter troubles, and his old pupil pronounces him as well as he had ever known him.

Amongst Locke's correspondents in these years was the celebrated physician, Dr. Sloane, now Secretary of the Royal Society, afterwards created Sir Hans Sloane. In writing to him at the end of the century, evidently in answer to a request, Locke proposes a scheme for rectifying the calendar. Notwithstanding the reformation which had already taken place in many foreign countries, it will be recollected that the English year then began on the 25th of March, instead of the 1st of January, and that, by reckoning the year at exactly $365\frac{1}{4}$ days, or at 11 m. 14 sec. longer than its actual length, our time lagged ten days behind that of most other European countries, as well as the real solar time. The inconvenience, especially in transactions with foreign merchants, had become very great. The advent of the new century, inasmuch as the centenary year would be counted as a leap-year in England, but not in other countries where the new style or Gregorian calendar prevailed, would add an eleventh day to the amount of discrepancy, and hence the subject was now attracting more than ordinary attention. Locke's remedy was to omit the intercalar day in the year 1700, according to the rule of the Gregorian calendar, as also for the ten next

leap-years following, "by which easy way," he says, "we should in forty-four years insensibly return to the new style." "This," he adds, "I call an easy way, because it would be without prejudice or disturbance to any one's civil rights, which, by lopping off ten or eleven days at once in any one year, might perhaps receive inconvenience, the only objection that ever I heard made against rectifying our account." He also suggested that the year should begin, as in most other European countries, on the 1st of January. No change, however, was made till, by an Act of Parliament passed in 1750-1, it was ordered that the year 1752 should begin on the 1st of January, and that the day succeeding the 2nd of September in that year should be reckoned as the 14th. Locke's other correspondence with Sloane shows the interest which he still took in medical matters, and how ready he always was to expend time and thought on attending to the ailments of his poor neighbours at Oates.

During the latter years of Locke's life his principal literary employment consisted in paraphrasing and writing commentaries on some of St. Paul's epistles. He thought that this portion of Scripture offered peculiar difficulties, and finding, as he says, that he did not understand it himself, he set to work, rather for his own sake, and perhaps also that of the household at Oates, than with any view of publication, to attempt to clear up its obscurities. The labour was a work of love, and to a man of Locke's devout disposition, with almost a child-like confidence in the guidance of Scripture, the occupation must have afforded a peculiar solace in the intervals of his disease, and as he felt that he was rapidly approaching the confines of that other world which had so long been familiar to his thoughts. Though he was induced to consent to

the publication of these commentaries, and though he himself prepared an introduction to them, they did not appear till after his death. They were then issued by instalments, coming out at intervals between 1705 and 1707 inclusively.

Locke's political interests, always keen, were specially active in the winter of 1701-2. England was just then on the point of engaging in the war of the Spanish Succession. In the previous September an alliance against France and Spain had been concluded between the emperor and the two great maritime powers, England and Holland. Almost immediately after the conclusion of this treaty, James the Second had died at St. Germain, and not only had the French king allowed his son to be proclaimed King of England but had himself received him with royal honours at the court of Versailles. The patriotic and protestant feeling of the country was thoroughly roused, and the new parliament, which met on the 30th of December, was prepared to take the most energetic measures for the purpose of supporting the national honour and the Protestant succession. The king's speech, on opening the parliament, excited an outburst of enthusiasm throughout the nation. He conjured the members to disappoint the hopes of their enemies by their unanimity. As he was ready to show himself the common father of his people, he exhorted them to cast out the spirit of party and division, so that there might no longer be any distinction but between those who were friends to the Protestant religion and the present establishment, and those who wished for a popish prince and a French government. The speech was printed in English, Dutch, and French, framed, and hung up, as an article of furniture, in the houses of good Protestants, both at home and

abroad. Locke, writing to Peter King four days after the meeting of parliament, asks him to send a copy of the king's speech, "printed by itself, and without paring off the edges." He suggests that, in addition to what the two Houses had done, the city of London and counties of England should, "with joined hearts and hands return his Majesty addresses of thanks for his taking such care of them." "Think of this with yourself," he says, "and think of it with others who can and ought to think how to save us out of the hands of France, into which we must fall, unless the whole nation exert its utmost vigour, and that speedily." He is specially urgent on his cousin not to leave town, or to think of circuit business, till the kingdom has been put in an effectual state of defence. "I think it no good husbandry for a man to get a few fees on circuit and lose Westminster Hall." By losing Westminster Hall he does not, apparently, mean losing the chance of a judgeship, but forfeiting those rights and liberties, and that personal and national independence which the Revolution had only so lately restored. "For, I assure you, Westminster Hall is at stake, and I wonder how any one of the house can sleep till he sees England in a better state of defence, and how he can talk of anything else till that is done." But a majority, at least, of the House of Commons was fully alive to its responsibilities; enormous supplies were voted, and almost every conceivable measure was taken for securing the Protestant succession to the crown. A few days after Locke wrote the letter last quoted, King William died. His reflections on that event or on the political prospects under William's successor, we do not possess.

As the war proceeded, Locke's old friend, the Earl of Monmouth, now become Earl of Peterborough, was en-

trusted with a naval expedition against the Spanish possessions in the West Indies. He had a great desire to see Locke before his departure, and, Locke being unable to come up to London, he and the Countess drove down to Oates about the middle of November, 1702. It is characteristic of the times that Locke was "much in pain" about their getting back safely to town, the days being then so short. His young friend, Arent Furly, who was also a protégé and frequent correspondent of Lord Shaftesbury, went out as Lord Peterborough's secretary, and seems to have acquitted himself in the position with marked diligence and success. The early promise which he gave, however, was soon blighted. This young play-fellow and foster-child, as he might almost have been called, of Locke, died only a few years after him, in 1711 or 1712. Before accompanying Lord Peterborough on his expedition, he had been living for some time, first at Oates, and afterwards in lodgings in the neighbourhood, for the purpose of learning English.

It is gratifying to find that, during the autumn of this year, Locke had received a visit from Newton. During the discussion of the re-coinage question, and the active operations which followed for the purpose of carrying out the decisions of parliament, they must have been thrown a good deal together. Montague declared that, had it not been for the energetic measures taken by Newton, as Warden of the Mint, the re-coinage would never have been effected. When, however, Newton came down to visit Locke at Oates, in 1702, their conversation seems to have turned mainly on theological topics. Locke showed Newton his notes upon the Corinthians, and Newton requested the loan of them. But, like most borrowers, he neglected to return them, nor did he take any notice of

a letter from Locke, who was naturally very anxious to recover his manuscript. Peter King was asked to try to manage the matter. He was to call at Newton's residence in Jermyn Street, to deliver a second note, and to find out, if he could, the reasons of Newton's silence, and of his having kept the papers so long. But he was to do this "with all the tenderness in the world," for "he is a nice man to deal with, and a little too apt to raise in himself suspicions where there is no ground." The emissary was also, if he could do it with sufficient adroitness, to discover Newton's opinion of the Commentary. But he was by no means to give the slightest cause of offence. "Mr. Newton is really a very valuable man, not only for his wonderful skill in mathematics, but in divinity too, and his great knowledge in the scriptures, wherein I know few his equals. And therefore pray manage the whole matter so as not only to preserve me in his good opinion, but to increase me in it; and be sure to press him to nothing but what he is forward in himself to do." In this letter Locke, notwithstanding the caution with which he felt it necessary to approach one of so susceptible a temperament, says, "I have several reasons to think him truly my friend." And in this generous judgment there can be little doubt he was right. The friends probably never met again, but Newton is said to have paid a visit, on one of his journeys perhaps from London to Cambridge, to Locke's tomb at High Laver. Peter King succeeded in recovering the manuscript, and at the same time or soon afterwards there came a letter, criticizing one of Locke's interpretations, but expressing a general opinion that the "paraphrase and commentary on these two epistles is done with very great care and judgment."

Something should here be said of two friends whom Locke had made in later life, one of whom seems to have been constantly about him during his last years. The less intimate of these was Samuel Bolde, a Dorsetshire clergyman, who had come forward, in 1697, to defend the *Reasonableness of Christianity* against Edwards' attacks, and who afterwards did Locke a similar service in replying to the assailants of the *Essay*. He was one of Locke's correspondents, and, once at least, paid him a visit at Oates. Bolde's outspokenness and independence of judgment naturally excited Locke's admiration. There are some memorable sentences in a letter written to him in 1699. "To be learned in the lump, by other men's thoughts, and to be in the right by saying after others, is the much easier and quieter way; but how a rational man, that should inquire and know for himself, can content himself with a faith or a religion taken upon trust, or with such a servile submission of his understanding as to admit all and nothing else but what fashion makes passable among men, is to me astonishing. I do not wonder you should have, in many points, different apprehensions from what you meet with in authors. With a free mind, which unbiassedly pursues truth, it cannot be otherwise." After expanding these thoughts, and applying them to the study of Scripture, he goes on to advise Bolde how to supply a mental defect that he had complained of, namely, that "he lost many things because they slipped from him." The simple method was to write them down as they occurred. "The great help to the memory is writing," Bacon had said. Locke emphasizes the dictum, and adds, "If you have not tried it, you cannot imagine the difference there is in studying with and without a pen in your hand." "The thoughts that come unsought, and as it were dropped

into the mind, are commonly the most valuable of any we have, and therefore should be secured, because they seldom return again."

The other friend, whose acquaintance had only been made during these later years, was Anthony Collins, who was not more than twenty-eight years of age when Locke died. Collins afterwards attained great celebrity as a Deistical writer, but none of his theological works appeared till some time after Locke's death. Locke, with his sincere and simple belief in the divine origin of the Christian Revelation, would doubtless, had he lived to see them, have been shocked with their matter, and still more with their style. But, at the present time, Collins presented himself to him simply in the light of an ingenuous young man, with rare conversational powers and wide interests, and with what Locke valued far more, an eager desire to find out the truth. No one can have read the tracts, *An Inquiry concerning Human Liberty*, and *Liberty and Necessity*, without recognizing the acuteness and directness of Collins' intellect, and these, we know, were qualities always peculiarly acceptable to Locke. Moreover, to encourage and bring forward younger men had invariably been one of his main delights. Hence we may, perhaps, abate our surprise at the apparently exaggerated language in which he addresses this friend, who was so much his junior in age, and who must have become known to him only so recently. "Why do you make yourself so necessary to me? I thought myself pretty loose from the world; but I feel you begin to fasten me to it again. For you make my life, since I have had your friendship, much more valuable to me than it was before." "If I were now setting out in the world, I should think it my great happiness to have such a companion as you, who had a

relish for truth, would in earnest seek it with me, from whom I might receive it undisguised, and to whom I might communicate freely what I thought true. Believe it, my good friend, to love truth for truth's sake is the principal part of human perfection in this world and the seed-plot of all other virtues, and, if I mistake not, you have as much of it as I ever met with in anybody." Then he adds pathetically, but with a tone of hopefulness in the labours of others, which is not commonly found amongst old men, "When I consider how much of my life has been trifled away in beaten tracks, where I tramped on with others only to follow those that went before us, I cannot but think I have just as much reason to be proud as if I had travelled all England, and, if you will, France too, only to acquaint myself with the roads and be able to tell how the highways lie, wherein those of equipage, and even the herd too, travel. Now, methinks—and these are often old men's dreams—I see openings to truth and direct paths leading to it, wherein a little industry and application would settle one's mind with satisfaction, and leave no darkness or doubt. But this is at the end of my day, when my sun is setting; and though the prospect it has given me be what I would not for anything be without—there is so much irresistible truth, beauty, and consistency in it—yet it is for one of your age, I think I ought to say for yourself, to set about it." What were those "openings to truth and direct paths leading to it"? Were they merely the delusive visions of an old man's fancies, or had he really formed wider conceptions of science, and pictured to himself more precise and fertile methods of reaching it? The sciences, it is needless to observe, have grown vastly since Locke's day; the methods of scientific research are far more numerous, more accurate,

richer in their results. Had Locke, in his thoughts at this time, at all anticipated the courses which inquiry and knowledge have since taken?

The letter to Collins, from which I have just quoted, was written on October 29, 1703. Within a year of that date, the end came. The wonder, indeed, is that, with his persistent malady, aggravated apparently in these latter years with other disorders, Locke's life had continued so long. The reasons are probably to be sought in his unfailing cheerfulness, in the variety of interests which diverted his mind from the thought of his own ailments, and in the judicious manner in which he regulated his exercise and diet. Of these personal traits, something may conveniently here be said. The remarkable cheerfulness of his disposition, his lively sense of humour, and his power of extracting amusement from all that was going on around him, have frequently come before us in the course of this biography. His temper was not moody, like that of so many men of letters, but pre-eminently sociable. When not actually engaged in his studies, he always liked to be in company, and enjoyed especially the society of young people and children. He had a happy knack of talking to his companions for the time being on the subjects which interested them most, and in this way he gained a very extensive knowledge of the various kinds of business and of a variety of arts and crafts. To working people he was often able to give very useful hints as to their own employments. This union of conversational qualities, grave and gay, invariably made him a welcome addition to any company, young or old, gentle or simple. An even temper, and a combination of happy gifts of this kind, will carry a man through much suffering, bodily and mental. From any mental troubles, on his own account,

Locke seems during these latter years of his life to have been remarkably free. From bodily suffering he was rarely exempt, but he always endured it with resignation, and endeavoured to obviate its causes by every precaution which his prudence or medical skill suggested. Thus, we have seen that, whenever it was possible, he preferred the quiet life and pure air of the country to the many attractions which the capital must have offered to a man with his wide acquaintance, and with so many political and literary interests. In diet he practised an abstemiousness very rare among men of that age. His ordinary drink was water, and to this habit he attributed not only his length of years, but also the extraordinary excellence of his eyesight. Till recently, a curious relic of Locke's water-drinking habits was preserved in the shape of a large mortar of spongy stone, which acted as a natural filter, and which he used to call his brew-house. He was assiduous in taking exercise, and was specially fond of walking and gardening. In the latter years of his life he used to ride out slowly every day after dinner. When advising his friend Clarke about his health, he says, "I know nothing so likely to produce quiet sleep as riding about gently in the air for many hours every day," and then, like a truly wise doctor, he adds, "If your mind can be brought to contribute a little its part to the laying aside troublesome ideas, I could hope this may do much." At last, when he was no longer able to sit on horseback, he commissioned Collins to have an open carriage specially made for him, the principle on which it was to be constructed being that "convenient carries it before ornamental."

In November, 1703, the Heads of Houses at Oxford—who at that time constituted the governing body, and through whose repressive and reactionary administration

the evil genius of Laud then and long afterwards continued to cast a blight on the University—resolved to discourage the reading of Locke's *Essay*. The attempt was futile, as they relied, not on coercion, but on the influence of their authority, which appears to have been held very cheap. Locke was now far too eminent a man to be troubled by so anile a demonstration of folly. "I take what has been done, as a recommendation of my book to the world," he says, in a letter to Collins; and then he promises himself and his friend much merriment on the subject when they next meet.

Locke's last literary labour appears to have been his *Fourth Letter for Toleration*. Jonas Proast, after a long interval, had returned to the charge in a pamphlet published in 1704; and Locke, unfortunately, thought it incumbent on him to reply, though he had long ceased to pay any regard to the assailants of the *Essay*. The *Letter* is unfinished. Its last words cannot have been written long before Locke's death.

The winter of 1703-4 seems to have been peculiarly trying to his health. He hardly expected to live through it; but he still maintained his cheerfulness, and followed his usual employments. On the 11th of April, 1704, he made his will—perhaps not his first. To most of his friends, relatives, and dependents he left some remembrance; but the bulk of his personal property he left to Frank Masham and Peter King, the latter of whom was sole executor and residuary legatee. All his manuscripts were left to King. Many of these were published for the first time by the seventh Lord King, in his *Life of Locke*. His land he designedly did not will, and so it devolved by law, in equal shares, on his two cousins, Peter King and Peter Stratton. His funeral was to be conducted without

any ostentation, and what it would otherwise have cost was to be divided amongst four poor labourers at Oates.

The approach of summer had not its usual restorative effect upon him. On the other hand, all the bad symptoms of his disease increased. To use his own expression, "the dissolution of the cottage was not far off." In a letter, written on the 1st of June, he earnestly pressed King to come to him, that he might pass some of the last hours of his life "in the conversation of one who is not only the nearest but the dearest to me of any man in the world." Both King and Collins seem to have visited him frequently during the last months of his life; and their society being cheerful, and the topics of their conversation interesting, he appears to have taken great pleasure in their company. He did not, however, find equal enjoyment in the visit of Dr. Edward Fowler, Bishop of Gloucester, who, like himself, was in a bad state of health. "I find two groaning people make but an uncomfortable concert." The moral he draws is, that men should enjoy their health and youth while they have it, "to all the advantages and improvements of an innocent and pleasant life," remembering that merciless old age is in pursuit of them. The lamp of life was now dimly flickering, but once more it burnt up in the socket before going out for ever. Peter King had been married on the 10th of September, and he and his bride must be received with all due honours at Oates. King was asked to cater for his own wedding feast, and goodly and dainty is the list of delicacies which he was to buy. But something, perhaps, might be omitted in which Mrs. King took special delight. "If there be anything that you can find your wife loves, be sure that provision be made of that, and plentifully, whether I have mentioned it or no."

The feast was to be cooked by "John Gray, who was bred up in my Lord Shaftesbury's kitchen, and was my Lady Dowager's cook." The wedded pair arrived at Oates towards the end of the month, and well can we picture to ourselves the pride and pleasure with which the genial old man entertained the wife of his cousin and adopted son—the adopted son whom he had rescued from the grocer's shop at Exeter, and whose future eminence he must now have pretty clearly foreseen. A few days after King left Oates, he solemnly committed to him by letter the care of Frank Masham. "It is my earnest request to you to take care of the youngest son of Sir Francis and Lady Masham in all his concerns, as if he were your brother. Take care to make him a good, an honest, and an upright man. I have left my directions with him to follow your advice, and I know he will do it; for he never refused to do what I told him was fit." Then, turning to King himself, he says, "I wish you all manner of prosperity in this world, and the everlasting happiness of the world to come. That I loved you, I think you are convinced."

Peter King certainly executed the dying request of his cousin, so far as Frank Masham's material interests were concerned. Soon after he became Lord Chancellor, Frank Masham was appointed to the newly constituted office of Accountant-General in the Court of Chancery, a lucrative post, conferring the same status as a Mastership.

Locke retained his faculties and his cheerfulness to the last; but he grew gradually weaker, day by day. "Few people," says Lady Masham, "do so sensibly see death approach them as he did." A few days before his death he received the sacrament from the parish minister, professing his perfect charity with all men, and his "sincere

communion with the whole Church of Christ, by whatever name Christ's followers call themselves." In the last hours he talked much with the Mashams about their eternal concerns. As for himself, he had lived long enough, and enjoyed a happy life; but he looked forward to a better. At length, on the afternoon of the 28th of October, the spirit left him, and the earthly tabernacle was dissolved. His body is buried in the churchyard of High Laver, in a pleasant spot on the south side of the church. The Latin epitaph on the wall above the tomb was written by himself. It tells us that he had lived content with his own insignificance: that, brought up among letters, he had advanced just so far as to make an acceptable offering to truth alone: if the traveller wanted an example of good life, he would find one in the Gospel; if of vice, would that he could find one nowhere; if of mortality, there and everywhere.

"His death," says Lady Masham, "was, like his life, truly pious, yet natural, easy, and unaffected; nor can time, I think, ever produce a more eminent example of reason and religion than he was, living and dying."

CHAPTER VIII.

ESSAY ON THE HUMAN UNDERSTANDING.

"WERE it fit to trouble thee," says Locke in his Epistle to the Reader, "with the history of this *Essay*, I should tell thee, that five or six friends meeting at my chamber, and discoursing on a subject very remote from this, found themselves quickly at a stand by the difficulties that rose on every side. After we had a while puzzled ourselves, without coming any nearer a resolution of those doubts which perplexed us, it came into my thoughts that we took a wrong course; and that, before we set ourselves upon inquiries of that nature, it was necessary to examine our own abilities, and see what objects our understandings were or were not fitted to deal with. This I proposed to the company, who all readily assented; and thereupon it was agreed that this should be our first inquiry."

This passage may serve not only to describe the occasion of Locke's *Essay*, but also to indicate the circumstance which constitutes the peculiar merit and originality of Locke as a philosopher. The science which we now call Psychology, or the study of mind, had hitherto, amongst modern writers, been almost exclusively subordinated to the interests of other branches of speculation. Some exception must, indeed, be made in favour of Hobbes and

Gassendi, Descartes and Spinoza, but all these authors treated the questions of psychology somewhat cursorily, while the two former seem usually to have had in view the illustration of some favourite position in physics or ethics, the two latter the ultimate establishment of some proposition relating to the nature or attributes of God. We may say then, without much exaggeration, that Locke was the first of modern writers to attempt at once an independent and a complete treatment of the phenomena of the human mind, of their mutual relations, of their causes and limits. His object was, as he himself phrases it, "to inquire into the original, certainty, and extent of human knowledge; together with the grounds and degrees of belief, opinion, and assent." This task he undertakes not in the dogmatic spirit of his predecessors, but in the critical spirit which he may be said to have almost inaugurated. As far as it is possible for a writer to divest himself of prejudice, and to set to his work with a candid and open mind, seeking help and information from all quarters, Locke does so. And the effect of his candour on his first readers must have been enhanced by the fact, not always favourable to his precision, that, as far as he can, he throws aside the technical terminology of the schools and employs the language current in the better kinds of ordinary literature and the well-bred society of his time. The absence of pedantry and of *parti pris* in a philosophical work was at that time so rare a recommendation that, no doubt, these characteristics contributed largely to the rapid circulation and the general acceptance of the *Essay*.

The central idea, which dominates Locke's work, is that all our knowledge is derived from experience. But this does not strike us so much as a thesis to be maintained as

a conclusion arrived at after a vast amount of patient thought and inquiry. Have we any ideas independent of experience? or, as Locke phrases it, are there any Innate Principles in the mind?

"It is an established opinion amongst some men, that there are in the Understanding, certain Innate Principles, some Primary Notions, κοιναὶ ἔννοιαι, characters, as it were, stamped upon the mind of man, which the Soul receives in its very first being and brings into the world with it."

This is the opinion which Locke examines and refutes in the first, or introductory, book of the *Essay*. It has often been objected that he mistakes and exaggerates the position which he is attacking. And so far as his distinguished predecessor, Descartes, is concerned (though to what extent Locke has him in mind, his habit of not referring to other authors by name prevents us from knowing), this is undoubtedly the case. For Descartes, though he frequently employs and accepts the expression "innate notions" or "innate ideas," concedes, as so many philosophers of the same school have done since, that this native knowledge is only implicit and requires definite experiences to elicit it. Thus, in his notes on the Programme of Regius, he expressly compares these innate notions or ideas with the nobility which is characteristic of certain ancient stocks, or with diseases, such as gout or gravel, which are said to be "innate" in certain families, not "because the infants of those families suffer from these diseases in their mother's womb, but because they are born with a certain disposition or tendency to contract them." Here Descartes seems to have been on the very point of stumbling on the principle of heredity which, in the hands of recent physiologists and psychologists, has done so much towards reconciling rival theories on the

nature and origin of knowledge and clearing up many of the difficulties which attach to this branch of speculation. It must be confessed, however, that in his better-known works he often employs unguarded and unexplained expressions which might easily suggest the crude form of the *à priori* theory attacked by Locke. Still more is this the case with other authors, such as Lord Herbert of Cherbury and Dr. Ralph Cudworth, whose works were in general circulation at the time when Locke was composing his *Essay*. Lord Herbert, though indeed he acknowledges that "common notions" (the expression by which he designates *à priori* principles) require an object to elicit them into consciousness, seems invariably to regard them as ready-made ideas implanted in the human mind from its very origin. They are given by an independent faculty, Natural Instinct, which is to be distinguished from Internal Sense, External Sense, and Reasoning ("Discursus"), the sources of our other ideas. They are to be found in every man, and universal consent is the main criterion by which they are to be discriminated. In fact, there can be no doubt that the dogma of Innate Ideas and Innate Principles, in the form attacked by Locke, was a natural, if not the legitimate, interpretation of much of the philosophical teaching of the time, and that it was probably the form in which that teaching was popularly understood. It lay, moreover, as Locke's phrase is, along the "common road," which was travelled by the majority of men who cared about speculative subjects at all, and from which it was novel, and therefore dangerous, to diverge.

The most effective, perhaps, of Locke's arguments against this doctrine is his challenge to the advocates of Innate Principles to produce them, and show what and how many they are. Did men find such innate proposi-

tions stamped on their minds, nothing could be more easy than this. "There could be no more doubt about their number than there is about the number of our fingers; and 'tis like, then, every system would be ready to give them us by tale." Now "'tis enough to make one suspect that the supposition of such innate principles is but an opinion taken up at random; since those who talk so confidently of them are so sparing to tell us which they are." (Bk. I., ch. iii., § 14.) The great majority, indeed, of those who maintain the existence of innate principles and ideas attempt no enumeration of them. Those who do attempt such an enumeration differ in the lists which they draw up, and, moreover, as Locke shows in the case of the five practical principles of Lord Herbert of Cherbury, give no sufficient reason why many other propositions, which they regard as secondary and derived, should not be admitted to the same rank with the so-called innate principles, which they assume to be primary and independent. Locke is here treading on safer ground than in many of his other criticisms. The fact is that it is impossible clearly to discriminate between those propositions which are axiomatic and those which are derived—or, in the language of the theory which Locke is combating, between those which are innate and those which are adventitious. Race, temperament, mental capacity, habit, education, produce such differences between man and man that a proposition which to one man appears self-evident and unquestionable will by another be admitted only after considerable hesitation, while a third will regard it as doubtful, or even false. Especially is this the case, as Locke does not fail to point out, with many of the principles of religion and morals, which have now been received by so constant a

tradition in most civilized nations that they have come to be regarded as independent of reason, and, if not "ingraven on the mind" from its birth, at least exempt from discussion and criticism. The circumstance, however, that they are not universally acknowledged shows that to mankind in general, at any rate, they are not axiomatic, and that, however clear and convincing the reasons for them may be, at all events those reasons require to be stated. It was this determined and vigorous protest against multiplying assumptions and attempting to withdraw a vast mass of propositions, both speculative and practical, from the control and revision of reason that, perhaps, constituted the most distinctive and valuable part of Locke's teaching.

Having cleared from his path the theory of Innate Principles, Locke proceeds, in the Second Book, to inquire how the mind comes to be furnished with its knowledge. Availing himself of a metaphor which had been commonly employed by the Stoics, but which reaches as far back as Aristotle and Plato, and even as Æschylus, he compares the mind to "white paper, void of all characters, without any ideas," and then asks:—

"Whence comes it by that vast store, which the busy and boundless Fancy of Man has painted on it, with an almost endless variety? Whence has it all the materials of Reason and Knowledge? To this I answer in one word, From *Experience*: In that all our knowledge is founded; and from that it ultimately derives itself. Our observation employed either about external or sensible objects, or about the internal operations of our minds perceived and reflected on by our selves, is that which supplies our Understandings with all the materials of thinking. These two are the Fountains of Knowledge from which all the ideas we have, or can naturally have, do spring."

"First, our Senses, conversant about particular sensible objects, do convey into the mind several distinct perceptions of things, according to those various ways in which those objects do affect them. And thus we come by those ideas we have of Yellow, White, Heat, Cold, Soft, Hard, Bitter, Sweet, and all those which we call Sensible Qualities, which when I say the senses convey into the mind, I mean they from external objects convey into the mind what produces there those Perceptions. This great source of most of the Ideas we have, depending wholly upon our senses, and derived by them to the Understanding, I call SENSATION."

"Secondly, the other Fountain, from which Experience furnisheth the Understanding with Ideas, is the Perception of the operations of our own minds within us, as it is employed about the ideas it has got; which operations, when the soul comes to reflect on and consider, do furnish the Understanding with another set of ideas which could not be had from things without; and such are Perception, Thinking, Doubting, Believing, Reasoning, Knowing, Willing, and all the different actings of our own minds, which we being conscious of, and observing in our selves, do from these receive into our Understandings as distinct ideas as we do from bodies affecting our senses. This source of ideas every man has wholly in himself. And though it be not sense, as having nothing to do with external objects, yet it is very like it, and might properly enough be called Internal Sense. But as I call the other *Sensation*, so I call this REFLECTION, the ideas it affords being such only as the mind gets by reflecting on its own operations within itself. By Reflection, then, in the following part of this Discourse, I would be understood to mean that notice which the mind takes of its own operations and the manner of them, by reason whereof there come to be Ideas of these operations in the Understanding. These two, I say, namely, external material things, as the objects of Sensation, and the operations of our own minds within, as the objects of Reflection, are to me the only originals from whence all our ideas take their beginning. The term operations here I use in a large sense, as com-

prehending not barely the actions of the mind about its ideas, but some sort of passions arising sometimes from them, such as is the satisfaction or uneasiness arising from any thought."

"The Understanding seems to me not to have the least glimmering of any ideas which it doth not receive from one of these two. External objects furnish the mind with the ideas of sensible qualities, which are all those different perceptions they produce in us; and the mind furnishes the Understanding with ideas of its own operations." (Bk. II., ch. i., §§ 2—5.)

In deriving our knowledge from two distinct sources, Sensation and Reflection, Locke is advancing a position altogether different from that of what is properly called the Sensationalist school of philosophers. Gassendi and Hobbes before him, Condillac and Helvétius after him, found the ultimate source of all our knowledge in the impressions of sense. The emphatic words of Hobbes, standing in the forefront of the *Leviathan*, are:—"The original of all the thoughts of men is that which we call Sense, for there is no conception in a man's mind which hath not at first, totally or by parts, been begotten upon the organs of sense." And Condillac, aiming at a theory still more simple, derives from sensations not only all our knowledge but all our faculties. "The other fountain," then, of Locke has, we must recollect, a peculiar significance as distinguishing his psychology from that of the sensationalist writers who preceded and who followed him. His theory of the origin of knowledge may fairly be called an experiential, but it cannot with any truth be called a sensationalist theory.

The rest of the Second Book of the *Essay* is mainly taken up with the attempt to enumerate our simple ideas of Sensation and Reflection, and to resolve into them our other ideas, however complex. To follow Locke into

these details would be to re-write the *Essay*. I propose simply to direct the attention of the reader to a few salient points.

Of "Simple Ideas of Sensation," some "come into our minds by one Sense only." Such are the various colours, sounds, tastes, and smells, Heat and Cold, and the sensation of Resistance or Impenetrability, which Locke denominates Solidity. "The Ideas we get by more than one sense are of Space or Extension, Figure, Rest, and Motion."

The "Simple Ideas of Reflection," which the mind acquires, when "it turns its view inward upon itself, and observes its own actions about those ideas it has received from without," are mainly two, namely, Perception or Thinking, and Volition or Willing.

"There be other simple ideas, which convey themselves into the mind by all the ways of Sensation and Reflection, namely, Pleasure or Delight, Pain or Uneasiness, Power, Existence, Unity. (Bk. II., ch. vii., § 1.)

"These simple ideas, the materials of all our knowledge, are suggested and furnished to the mind only by those two ways above mentioned, namely Sensation and Reflection. When the Understanding is once stored with these simple ideas, it has the power to repeat, compare, and unite them, even to an almost infinite variety, and so can make at pleasure new complex ideas. But it is not in the power of the most exalted Wit or enlarged Understanding, by any quickness or variety of thoughts, to invent or frame one new simple idea in the mind, not taken in by the ways before mentioned. Nor can any force of the Understanding destroy those that are there: the dominion of man, in this little world of his own understanding, being much what the same as it is in the great world of visible things, wherein his power, however managed by art and skill, reaches no farther than to compound and divide the materials that are made to his hand, but can do nothing towards the making the least particle of new

matter or destroying one atom of what is already in being. The same inability will every one find in himself, who shall go about to fashion in his Understanding any simple idea, not received in by his senses from external objects or by reflection from the operations of his own mind about them." (Bk. II. ch. ii., § 2.)

In the reception of these simple ideas, Locke regards the mind as merely passive. It can no more refuse to have them, alter or blot them out, than a mirror can refuse to receive, alter, or obliterate the images reflected on it. The Understanding, before the entrance of simple ideas, is like a dark room, and external and internal sensation are the windows by which light is let in. But when the light has once penetrated into this dark recess, the Understanding has an almost unlimited power of modifying and transforming it. It can create complex ideas, and that in an infinite variety, out of its simple ideas, and this it does chiefly by combining, comparing, and separating them.

"This shows man's power, and its way of operation, to be much what the same in the material and intellectual world. For the materials in both being such as he has no power over, either to make or destroy, all that man can do is either to unite them together, or to set them by one another, or wholly separate them." (Bk. II., ch. xii., § 1.)

The complex ideas are classified under three heads, modes, which may be either simple or mixed, substances, and relations. Here, however, my analysis must stop, and I must content myself with giving a few examples of the manner in which Locke attempts to resolve "complex ideas" into "simple" ones.

The idea of Infinity, to take one of his most celebrated resolutions, is merely a simple mode of Quantity, as Im-

mensity is a simple mode of Space, and Eternity of Duration. All alike are negative ideas, arising whenever we allow the mind "an endless progression of thought," without any effort to arrest it. "How often soever" a man doubles an unit of space, be it a "mile, or diameter of the earth, or of the *Orbis Magnus*," or any otherwise multiplies it, "he finds that, after he has continued this doubling in his thoughts and enlarged his idea as much as he pleases, he has no more reason to stop, nor is one jot nearer the end of such addition, than he was at first setting out; the power of enlarging his idea of Space by farther additions remaining still the same, he hence takes idea of infinite space." (Bk. II., ch. xvii., § 3.)

With the idea of "Substance" Locke is fairly baffled. If we examine our idea of a horse, a man, a piece of gold, &c., we are able to resolve it into a number of simple ideas, such as extension, figure, solidity, weight, colour, &c., co-existing together. But, according to Locke, who, in this respect, was merely following in the track of the generally received philosophy of his time, there is, in addition to all these qualities, a *substratum* in which they inhere, or, to use his own language, "wherein they do subsist, and from which they do result." Now of the various qualities we can form a clear idea and give a more or less intelligible account. But can we form a clear idea or give an intelligible account of the substratum? Locke here is bold enough to break off from the orthodox doctrine of the time, and confess candidly that we cannot. The idea of this Substratum or Substance is a "confused idea of something to which the qualities belong, and in which they subsist." The name Substance denotes a Support, "though it be certain we have no clear or distinct idea of that thing we suppose a support."

"So that if any one will examine himself concerning his notion of pure Substance in general, he will find he has no other idea of it at all but only a supposition of he knows not what Support of such qualities which are capable of producing simple ideas in us; which qualities are commonly called Accidents. If any one should be asked what is the subject wherein Colour or Weight inheres, he would have nothing to say but the solid extended parts. And if he were demanded what is it that Solidity and Extension inhere in, he would not be in a much better case than the Indian who, saying that the world was supported by a great elephant, was asked what the elephant rested on? To which his answer was, a great tortoise. But, being again pressed to know what gave support to the broad-backed tortoise, replied, something, he knew not what. And thus here, as in all other cases, where we use words without having clear and distinct ideas, we talk like children; who, being questioned what such a thing is, which they know not, readily give this satisfactory answer, That it is something; which in truth signifies no more, when so used, either by children or men, but that they know not what, and that the thing they pretend to know and talk of is what they have no distinct idea of at all, and so are perfectly ignorant of it and in the dark." (Bk. II., ch. xxiii., § 2.)

No wonder that the next step in philosophy was to get rid altogether of this "something, we know not what." For, if we know not what it is, how do we know that it exists, and is not a mere fiction of the Schools? This step was taken by Berkeley, as respects matter, and by Hume the same negative criticism which Berkeley confines to matter was boldly, and, as it seems to me, far less successfully and legitimately extended to mind. Indeed, were it not for his express assurance to the contrary, we should often be tempted to think that Locke himself regarded this distinction of Substance and Accident, so far, at least, as it affects Matter and its attributes, as

untenable, and was anxious to insinuate a doubt as to the very existence of the "unknown somewhat."

In this chapter, Locke maintains that there is no more difficulty, if indeed so much, in the notion of immaterial spirit as of body. "Our idea of Body, as I think, is an extended solid substance, capable of communicating motion by impulse; and our idea of our Soul, as an immaterial Spirit, is of a substance that thinks, and has a power of exciting motion in body by Will or Thought." (§ 22.) Now, it is "no more a contradiction that Thinking should exist separate and independent from Solidity, than it is a contradiction that Solidity should exist separate and independent from Thinking, they being both but simple ideas independent one from another. And, having as clear and distinct ideas in us of Thinking as of Solidity, I know not why we may not as well allow a thinking thing without solidity, that is immaterial, to exist, as a solid thing without thinking, that is matter, to exist; especially since it is no harder to conceive how Thinking should exist without Matter, than how Matter should think." (§ 32.)

In the Fourth Book (ch. iii., § 6), however, he gave great scandal by suggesting the possibility that Matter might think, that it was not much more repugnant to our conceptions that God might, if he pleased, "superadd to Matter a Faculty of Thinking, than that he should superadd to it another substance with a faculty of thinking." At the same time, he regarded it as no less than a contradiction to suppose that Matter, "which is evidently in its own nature void of sense and thought," should be the "eternal first thinking Being," or God Himself; and, in his First Letter to the Bishop of Worcester, he grants that *in us* (as distinguished from the lower animals) it is, in the highest degree, probable that the "thinking sub-

stance" is immaterial. Materialism, therefore, as ordinarily understood, is certainly no part of Locke's system.

In discussing the idea of Substance, Locke seems generally to be thinking more of Matter than Mind. But, in an early part of the *Essay* (Bk. II., ch. xiii., § 18), he very rightly begs those who talk so much of Substance "to consider whether applying it, as they do, to the infinite incomprehensible God, to finite Spirit, and to Body, it be in the same sense, and whether it stands for the same idea, when each of those three so different beings are called Substances." As applied respectively to Matter and to Mind (whether finite or infinite), it appears to me that the word Substance assumes a very different meaning, and that the absurdities which it is possible to fix on the distinction between Matter and its attributes by no means extend to the distinction between Mind and its operations. For an union of certain forces or powers affecting our organisms in certain ways seems to exhaust our conception of external objects (the notion of externality, I conceive, being quite independent of that of the Substrate "matter"), but no similar enumeration of mental acts and feelings seems adequately to take the place of that "Self," or "I," of which we regard these as merely phases and modifications. It would much conduce to clearness in philosophical discussions if, at least amongst those who admit the dualism of matter and mind, the word Substance, whenever applied to incorporeal objects, were replaced by the word Mind, and, whenever applied to corporeal objects, by the word Matter.

The Second Book closes, in the Fourth and subsequent editions, with a short but very interesting Chapter on the "Association of Ideas." The student of Mental Philo-

sophy will find it instructive to compare this Chapter with the previous account given by Hobbes (*Human Nature*, ch. iv.; *Leviathan*, Pt. I., ch. iii.), and the subsequent account given by Hume (*Human Nature*, Pt. I., § 4; *Essays on Human Understanding*, § 3), of the same phenomena. Locke appears to have been the first author to use the exact[1] expression "Association of Ideas," and it is curious to find in this chapter (§ 5) the word "inseparable," so familiar to the readers of recent works on psychology, already applied to designate certain kinds of association. Some ideas, indeed, have, he says, a natural correspondence, but others, that "in themselves are not at all of kin," "come to be so united in some men's minds that one no sooner at any time comes into the understanding than the whole Gang, always inseparable, show themselves together."

The following passage on what may be called the associations of antipathy affords a good instance of Locke's power of homely and apposite illustration :—

"Many children imputing the pain they endured at school to their books they were corrected for, so join those ideas together, that a book becomes their aversion, and they are never reconciled to the study and use of them all their lives after; and thus reading becomes a torment to them, which otherwise possibly they might have made the great pleasure of their lives. There are rooms convenient enough, that some men cannot study in, and fashions of vessels, which though never so clean and commodious, they cannot drink out of, and that by reason of some accidental ideas which are annexed to them and make them

[1] Sir W. Hamilton refers to La Chambre (*Système de l'Ame* : Paris, 1664) as having anticipated Locke in the use of this expression. In Liv. IV., ch. ii., art. 9, La Chambre speaks of "l' Union et la Liaison des Images," but I cannot find that he approaches any nearer to the now established phraseology.

offensive. And who is there that hath not observed some man to flag at the appearance or in the company of some certain person not otherwise superior to him, but because, having once on some occasion got the ascendant, the idea of authority and distance goes along with that of the person, and he that has been thus subjected is not able to separate them."

Had Locke's *Essay* ended with the Second Book, we should hardly have detected in it any incompleteness. It might have been regarded as an analytical work on the nature and origin of our ideas, or, in other words, on the elements of our knowledge. There are, however, a third and fourth book—the former treating "Of Words," the latter "Of Knowledge and Opinion." Locke's notion appears to have been that, after treating of "Ideas," mainly as regarded in themselves, it was desirable to consider them as combined in Judgments or Propositions, and to estimate the various degrees of assent which we give or ought to give to such judgments, when formed. The Fourth Book thus, to a certain extent, takes the place, and was probably designed to take the place, of the Logic of the Schools. "But," to quote Locke's own language in the Abstract of the *Essay*, "when I came a little nearer to consider the nature and manner of human knowledge, I found it had so much to do with propositions, and that words, either by custom or necessity, were so mixed with it, that it was impossible to discourse of knowledge with that clearness we should, without saying something first of words and language."

The three last Chapters of the Third Book are remarkable for their sound sense, and may still be read with the greatest advantage by all who wish to be put on their guard against the delusions produced by misleading or inadequate language—those "Idola Fori" which Bacon

describes as the most troublesome of the phantoms which beset the mind in its search for truth. Some of the best and freshest of Locke's thoughts, indeed, are to be found in this book, and specially in the less technical parts of it.

The Fourth Book, under the head of Knowledge, treats of a great variety of interesting topics: of the nature of knowledge, its degrees, its extent, and reality; of the truth and certainty of Universal Propositions; of the logical axioms, or laws of thought; of the evidence for the existence of a God; of Faith and Reason; of the Degrees of Assent; of Enthusiasm; of Error. Into these attractive regions it is impossible that I can follow my author, but the reader who wishes to see examples of Locke's strong practical sense and, at the same time, to understand the popularity so soon and so constantly accorded to the *Essay*, should make acquaintance at least with the four chapters last named.

From the task of description I now pass to that of criticism, though this must be confined within still narrower limits than the former, and indeed, amongst the multiplicity of subjects which invite attention, I must confine myself to one only: the account of the ultimate origin of our knowledge, which forms the main subject of the *Essay*.

Locke, as we have seen, derived all our knowledge from Experience. But experience, with him, was simply the experience of the individual. In order to acquire this experience, it was indeed necessary that we should have certain "inherent faculties." But of these "faculties" he gives no other account than that God has "furnished" or "endued" us with them. Thus, the *Deus ex*

machina was as much an acknowledged necessity in the philosophy of Locke, and was, in fact, almost as frequently invoked, as in that of his antagonists. Is there any natural account to be given of the way in which we come to have these "faculties," of the extraordinary facility we possess of acquiring simple and forming complex ideas, is a question which he appears never to have put to himself. Inquiries of this kind, however, we must recollect were foreign to the men of his generation, and, in fact, have only recently become a recognized branch of mental philosophy. Hence it was that his system left so much unexplained. Not only the very circumstance that we have "inherent faculties" at all, but the wide differences of natural capacity which we observe between one man or race and another, and the very early period at which there spring up in the mind such notions as those of space, time, equality, causality, and the like, are amongst the many difficulties which Locke's theory, in its bare and unqualified form, fails satisfactorily to answer. It was thus comparatively easy for Kant to show that the problem of the origin of knowledge could not be left where Locke had left it; that our *à posteriori* experiences presuppose and are only intelligible through certain *à priori* perceptions and conceptions which the mind itself imposes upon them; or, to use more accurate language, through certain *à priori* elements in our perceptions and conceptions, which the mind contributes from itself. Thus the child appears, as soon as it is capable of recognizing any source of its impressions, to regard an object as situated in space, an event as happening in time, circumstances which have occurred together as likely to occur together again. But Kant's own account was defective in leaving this *à priori* element of our knowledge unexplained, or, at least, in

attempting no explanation of it. The mind, according to him, is possessed of certain Forms and Categories, which shape and co-ordinate the impressions received from the external world, being as necessary to the acquisition of experience, as experience is necessary to eliciting them into consciousness. But here his analysis ends. He does not ask how the mind comes to be possessed of these Forms and Categories, nor does he satisfactorily determine the precise relation in which they stand to the empirical elements of knowledge. When studying his philosophy, we seem indeed to be once more receding to the mysterious region of Innate Ideas. But the mystery is removed at least several stages back, if we apply to the solution of these mental problems the principle of Heredity, which has recently been found so potent in clearing up many of the difficulties connected with external nature. What are the "Innate Ideas" of the older philosophers, or the Forms and Categories of Kant, but certain *tendencies* of the mind to group phenomena, the "fleeting objects of sense," under certain relations and regard them under certain aspects? And why should these tendencies be accounted for in any other way than that by which we are accustomed to account for the tendency of an animal or plant, belonging to any particular species, to exhibit, as it developes, the physical characteristics of the species to which it belongs? The existence of the various mental tendencies and aptitudes, so far as the individual is concerned, is, in fact, to be explained by the principle of hereditary transmission. But how have these tendencies and aptitudes come to be formed in the race? The most scientific answer is that which, following the analogy of the theory now so widely admitted with respect to the physical structure of animals and plants, assigns their formation to

the continuous operation, through a long series of ages, of causes acting uniformly, or almost uniformly, in the same direction—in one word, of Evolution. This explanation may have its difficulties, but it is at any rate an attempt at a natural explanation where no other such attempt exists, and it has the merit of falling in with the explanations of corresponding phenomena now most generally accepted amongst scientific men in other departments of knowledge.

According to this theory, there is both an *à priori* and an *à posteriori* element in our knowledge, or, to speak more accurately, there are both *à priori* and *à posteriori* conditions of our knowing, the *à posteriori* condition being, as in all systems, individual experience, the *à priori* condition being inherited mental aptitudes, which, as a rule, become more and more marked and persistent with each successive transmission. Now Locke lays stress simply upon the *à posteriori* condition, though he recognizes a certain kind of *à priori* condition in our "natural faculties" and the simple ideas furnished by reflecting on their operations. The very important condition, however, of inherited aptitudes facilitating the formation of certain general conceptions concurrently or almost concurrently with the presentation of individual experiences did not occur to him as an element in the solution of the problem he had undertaken to answer, nor, in that stage of speculation, could it well have done so. His peculiar contribution to the task of solving this question consisted in his skilful and popular delineation of the *à posteriori* element in knowledge, and in his masterly exposure of the insufficiency of the account of the *à priori* element, as then commonly given. Locke's own theory was afterwards strained by Hume and

Hartley, and still more by his professed followers in France, such as Condillac and Helvétius, till at last, in the opinion of most competent judges, it snapped asunder. Then, under the massive, though often partial and obscure, treatment of Kant, came the rehabilitation of the *à priori* side of knowledge. In recent times, mainly by aid of the light thrown on it from other branches of inquiry, a more thorough and scientific treatment of psychology has done much, as I conceive, towards completing and reconciling the two divergent theories which at one time seemed hopelessly to divide the world of philosophic thinkers. And yet, as it appears to me, the ultimate mystery which surrounds the beginnings of intellectual life on the globe has by no means been removed.

As closely connected with this general criticism of Locke's system, or rather as presenting the defects just criticized under another form, I may notice the tendency of the *Essay* to bring into undue prominence the passive receptivities of the Mind, and to ignore its activity and spontaneity. The metaphor of the *tabula rasa*, the sheet of "white paper," once admitted, exercises a warping influence over the whole work. The author is so busied with the variety of impressions from without, that he seems sometimes almost to ignore the reaction of the mind from within. And yet this one-sideness of Locke's conception of mind may easily be exaggerated. "When the Understanding is once stored with simple ideas, it has the power to repeat, compare, and unite them, even to an almost infinite variety, and so can make at pleasure new complex ideas." (Bk. II., ch. ii., § 2.) Moreover, amongst the simple ideas themselves are the ideas of Reflection, "being such as the mind gets by reflecting on its own operations." The system, in fact, assumes an

almost ceaseless activity of mind, after the simple ideas of sensation have once entered it. But where it fails is in not recognizing that mental reaction which is essential to the formation of even the simple ideas of sensation themselves, as well as that spontaneous activity of mind which often seems to assert itself independently of the application of any stimulus from without. Here again a more scientific psychology than was possible in Locke's day comes to our aid, and shows, as is done by Mr. Bain and other recent writers, that the nerves, stored with energy, often discharge themselves of their own accord, and that movement is at least as much an original factor in animal life as is sensation, while sometimes it even precedes it in time. Had the constant interaction of mental activity and mental receptivity, producing a compound in which it is often almost impossible to disentangle the elements, been duly recognized by Locke, it would certainly have made his philosophy less simple, but it would have made it more true to facts. Physiology, however, was in his days in far too backward a state itself to throw much light upon Psychology. And the reaction against the prevailing doctrine of Innate Ideas naturally led to a system in which the influences of external circumstances, of education and habit, were exaggerated at the expense of the native powers, or as they might more appropriately be called the inherited aptitudes, and the spontaneous activity of the mind.

Here, tempting as it is to follow my author along the many tracks of psychological, metaphysical, and logical discussion which he always pursues with sagacity, candour, and good sense, if not always with the consistency and profundity which we should require from later writers, my criticism must necessarily end.

Before, however, finally dismissing the *Essay*, I must pause to ask what was the main work in the history of philosophy and thought which it accomplished. Many of its individual doctrines, doubtless, could not now be defended against the attacks of hostile criticism, and some even of those which are true in the main, are inadequate or one-sided. But its excellence lies in its tone, its language, its method, its general drift, its multiplicity of topics, the direction which it gave to the thoughts and studies of reflecting men for many generations subsequent to its appearance. Of the tone of candour and open-mindedness which pervades it, of the unscholastic and agreeable form in which it is written, and of the great variety of interesting topics which it starts, I have spoken already. Its method, though not absolutely new, even in modern times, for it is at least, to some extent, the method of Descartes, if not, in a smaller degree, of Hobbes and Gassendi, was still not common at the time of its appearance. Instead of stating a series of preconceived opinions, or of dogmas borrowed from some dominant school, in a systematic form, Locke sets to work to examine the structure of his own mind, and to analyze into their elements the ideas which he finds there. This, the *introspective* method, as it has been called, though undoubtedly imperfect, for it requires to be supplemented by the study of the minds of other men, if not of the lower animals, as made known by their acts, and words, and history, is yet a great advance on the purely *à priori*, and often fanciful, methods which preceded it. Nor do we fail to find in the *Essay* some employment of that *comparative* method to which I have just alluded: witness the constant references to children and savages in the First Book, and the stress which is laid on the variety of moral

sentiment existing amongst mankind. This inductive treatment of philosophical problems, mainly introspective, but in some measure also comparative, which was extremely rare in Locke's time, became almost universal afterwards. Closely connected with the method of the book is its general purport. By turning the mind inwards upon itself, and "making it its own object," Locke surmises that all its ideas come either from without or from experience of its own operations. He finds, on examination and analysis, no ideas which cannot be referred to one or other of these two sources. The single word "experience" includes them both, and furnishes us with a good expression for marking the general drift of his philosophy. It was pre-eminently a philosophy of experience, both in its method and in its results. It accepts nothing on authority, no foregone conclusions, no data from other sciences. It digs, as it were, into the mind, detaches the ore, analyzes it, and asks how the various constituents came there. The analytical and psychological direction thus given to philosophy by Locke was followed by most of the philosophical writers of the eighteenth century. However divergent in other respects, Hume and Berkeley, Hartley and Reid, the French Sensationalists, Kant, all commence their investigations by inquiring into the constitution, the capacities, and the limits of the Human Mind. Nor can any system of speculation be constructed on a sound basis, which has neglected to dig about the foundations of human knowledge, to ascertain what our thoughts can and what they cannot compass, and what are the varying degrees of assurance with which the various classes of propositions may be accepted by us. Two cautions, indeed, are necessary in applying this procedure. We must never forget that the mind is constantly

in contact with external nature, and that therefore a constant action and reaction is taking place between them; and we must never omit to base our inductions on an examination of other minds as well as our own, bringing into the account, as far as possible, every type and grade of mental development.

It was not, however, only its general spirit and direction which Locke impressed on the philosophy of the eighteenth century. He may almost be said to have recreated that philosophy. There is hardly a single French or English writer (and we may add Kant) down to the time of Dugald Stewart, or even of Cousin, Hamilton, and J. S. Mill, who does not profess either to develope Locke's system, or to supplement, or to criticize it. Followers, antagonists, and critics alike, seem to assume on the part of the reader a knowledge of the *Essay on the Human Understanding*, and to make that the starting-point of their own speculations. The office which Bacon assigns to himself with reference to knowledge generally might well have been claimed by Locke with reference to the science of mind. Both of them did far more than merely play the part of a herald, but of both alike it was emphatically true that they "rang the bell to call the other wits together."

CHAPTER IX.

LOCKE'S OPINIONS ON RELIGION AND MORALS, AND HIS THEOLOGICAL WRITINGS.

In the *Essay on the Human Understanding*, Bk. IV., ch. x., Locke attempts to prove the existence of a God, which, though God has given us no innate idea of Himself, he regards as "the most obvious truth that reason discerns," and as resting on evidence equal to mathematical certainty. Morality is, he maintains, entirely based upon the Will of God. If there were no God, there would, for him, be no morality, and this is the reason of his denying to Atheists the protection of the State. In the chapter on the Existence of God he says expressly that this truth is so fundamental that "all genuine morality depends thereon," and almost at the beginning of the *Essay* (Bk. I., ch. iii., § 6), while acknowledging that "several moral rules may receive from mankind a very general approbation, without either knowing or admitting the true ground of morality," he maintains that such true ground "can only be the Will and Law of a God, who sees men in the dark, has in his hand rewards and punishments, and power enough to call to account the proudest offender." Again, "the Rule prescribed by God is the true and only measure of Virtue." But how are we to ascer-

tain this rule? "God has by an inseparable connexion joined Virtue and Public Happiness together," and, hence, we have only to ascertain, by the use of the natural reason, what on the whole conduces most to the public welfare, in order to know the Divine Will. The rules, when arrived at, have a "moral and eternal obligation," and are enforced by fear of "the Hell God has ordained for the punishment of those that transgress them."

This form of Utilitarianism, resting on a theological basis and enforced by theological sanctions, is precisely that which afterwards became so popular and excited so much attention, when adopted in the well-known work of Paley. According to this system, we do what is right simply because God commands it, and because He will punish us if we disobey His orders. "By the fault is the rod, and with the transgression a fire ready to punish it." But, notwithstanding the divine origin and the divine sanction of morality, its measure and test are purely human. Each man is required by the Law of God to do all the good and prevent all the evil that he can, and, as good and evil are resolved into pleasure and pain, the ultimate test of virtue or moral conduct comes to be its conduciveness to promote the pleasures and avert the pains of mankind. Bentham, whose ethical system, it may be noticed, differed mainly from that of Locke and Paley by not being based on a theological foundation, extends the scope of morality to all sentient creatures, capable of pleasure and pain.

I shall not here criticize Locke's theory so far as it is common to other utilitarian systems of ethics, but shall simply content myself with pointing out that its influence on subsequent writers has seldom, if ever, been sufficiently recognized. The theological foundation, however, on which

it rests, and which is peculiar among the more prominent moralists of modern times to Locke and Paley, is open to an objection so grave and obvious, that it is curious it did not occur to the authors themselves. If what is right and wrong, good and evil, depends solely on the Will of God, how can we speak of God Himself as good? Goodness, as one of the Divine attributes, would then simply mean the conformity of God to His own Will. An elder contemporary of Locke, Ralph Cudworth, so clearly saw the difficulties and contradictions involved in this view of the nature and origin of morality, that he devotes a considerable portion of his *Treatise concerning Eternal and Immutable Morality* (which, however, was not published till 1731) to its refutation. And, possibly, Locke himself may have been conscious of some inconsistency between this theory (the ordinary one amongst the vulgar, though a comparatively rare one amongst philosophers) and the attribution of goodness to God. For, in his chapter on our knowledge of the existence of God, he never expressly mentions the attribute of goodness as pertaining to the Divine Nature, though in other parts of the *Essay* it must be acknowledged that he incidentally does so. Moralists and philosophical theologians have generally escaped the difficulties of Locke's theory by making right or moral goodness depend not on the Will but on the Nature of God, or else by regarding it as an ultimate fact, incapable of explanation, or, lastly, by resolving it into the idea of happiness or pleasure, which itself is then regarded as an ultimate fact in the constitution of sentient beings.

Two other characteristic doctrines of Locke's ethical system ought here to be mentioned, though it is impossible, within the space at my command, to discuss them. One

is that morality is a science capable of demonstration. The other, which is elaborately set out in the chapter on Power in the *Essay* (Bk. II., ch. xxi.), is that, though the Agent is free to act as he wills, the Will itself is invariably determined by motives. This solution of the well-worn controversy on the Freedom of the Will is almost identical with that offered by Hobbes before and by Hume afterwards, and is usually known as Determinism.

We have seen that the main sanctions of morality, with Locke, are the rewards and punishments of a future state. But how are we assured of future existence? Only by Revelation. "Good and wise men," indeed, "have always been willing to believe that the soul was immortal," but "though the Light of Nature gave some obscure glimmering, some uncertain hopes of a future state, yet Human Reason could attain to no clearness, no certainty about it, but it was Jesus Christ alone who brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." (Third Letter to the Bp. of Worcester). But, if the main sanctions of morality are those of a future state, and if it is Christians alone who feel anything approaching to an assurance of such a state, surely morality must come with somewhat weak credentials to the rest of mankind. And Locke doubtless believed this to be the case. But, then, if this be so, Christians ought to be prepared to tolerate a much lower morality than their own in dealing with men of other faiths—one of the many inconvenient consequences which result from founding morality on a theological basis.

Under the head of Locke's theological writings may be included the *Treatise on the Reasonableness of Christianity*

with the two *Vindications* of it, the *Essays on Toleration*, and the *Commentaries on some of the Epistles of St. Paul*. *The Reasonableness of Christianity* was published in 1695, and may be taken as expressing Locke's most matured opinions on the questions of which it treats, though, in reading it, we must always bear in mind the caution and reticence which any writer of that time, who diverged from the strict path of orthodoxy, was obliged to observe. There can be no doubt that his object in this work was to commend what he regarded as the fundamental truths of Christianity to the attention of reflecting men, and to vindicate to the Christian religion what he conceived to be its legitimate influence over mankind. But, in trying to effect this his main object, he seems also to have wished to correct what he regarded as certain popular errors, and to bring back Christianity to the norm of the Scriptures, instead of implicitly following the Fathers, the Councils, and the received theology of the Churches and the Schools. He attempted, he tells us, to clear his mind of all preconceived notions, and, following the lead of the Scriptures, of which he assumed the infallibility, to see whither they would lead him. We may certainly trust his own assertion that he had no thoughts of writing in the interest of any particular party, though, at the same time, it was evidently his aim to extract from the Scriptures a theory as much as possible in accordance with the requirements of human reason, or, in other words, to reconcile the divine light with the natural light of man. The main results at which he arrived may be stated very briefly, as follows. Adam had been created immortal, but, by falling from the state of perfect obedience, "he lost paradise, wherein was tranquillity and the tree of life, that is he lost bliss and immortality." "In Adam all

die," and hence all his descendants are mortal. But this sentence is to be taken in its literal sense, and not in the signification that "every one descended of him deserves endless torment in hell-fire." For it seems "a strange way of understanding a law, which requires the plainest and directest words, that by death should be meant eternal life in misery." Much less can death be interpreted as a necessity of continual sinning. "Can the righteous God be supposed, as a punishment of our sin, wherewith He is displeased, to put man under the necessity of sinning continually, and so multiplying the provocation?" Here it will be seen Locke strikes at the root of the doctrines of the taint and guilt of original sin, doctrines which had long been stoutly opposed by the Arminians or Remonstrants with whom he had associated in Holland. But though it would have been an injustice to condemn men, for the fault of another, to a state of misery "worse than non-being," it was no wrong to deprive them of that to which they had no right, the exceptional condition of immortality. Adam's sin then subjected all men to death. But in Christ they have again been made alive, and "the life which Jesus Christ restores to all men, is that life which they receive again at the resurrection." Now the conditions of our obtaining this gift are faith and repentance. But repentance implies the doing works meet for repentance, that is to say, leading a good life. And faith implies a belief not only in the one invisible, eternal, omnipotent God, but also in Jesus as the Messiah, who was born of a virgin, rose again from the grave, and ascended into heaven. When Christ came on earth, the minds of men had become so far blinded by sense and lust and superstition that it required some visible and unmistakable assertion of God's majesty and goodness to bring them

back to true notions of Him and of the Divine Law which He had set them. "Reason, speaking ever so clearly to the wise and virtuous, had never authority enough to prevail on the multitude." For the multitude were under the dominion of the priests, and "the priests, everywhere, to secure their empire, had excluded reason from having anything to do in religion." "In this state of darkness and error, in reference to the 'true God,' our Saviour found the world. But the clear revelation he brought with him dissipated this darkness, made the 'one invisible true God' known to the world; and that with such evidence and energy, that polytheism and idolatry have nowhere been able to withstand it." And, as he revealed to mankind a clear knowledge of the one true God, so also he revealed to them a clear knowledge of their duty, which was equally wanting.

"Natural religion, in its full extent, was nowhere that I know taken care of by the force of natural reason. It should seem, by the little that has hitherto been done in it, that it is too hard a task for unassisted reason to establish morality in all its parts, upon its true foundation, with a clear and convincing light. And it is at least a surer and shorter way to the apprehensions of the vulgar and mass of mankind, that one manifestly sent from God, and coming with visible authority from him, should, as a king and law-maker, tell them their duties and require their obedience, than leave it to the long and sometimes intricate deductions of reason to be made out to them. Such trains of reasoning the greater part of mankind have neither leisure to weigh, nor, for want of education and use, skill to judge of. You may as soon hope to have all the day-labourers and tradesmen, the spinsters and dairy-maids, perfect mathematicians, as to have them perfect in ethics this way. Hearing plain commands is the sure and only course to bring them to obedience and practice. The greater part cannot learn, and therefore they must believe."

It is true that reason quickly apprehends and approves of these truths, when once delivered, but "native and original truth is not so easily wrought out of the mine, as we, who have it delivered already dug and fashioned into our hands, are apt to imagine;" moreover, "experience shows that the knowledge of morality by mere natural light (how agreeable soever it be to it) makes but a slow progress and little advance in the world."

The evidence of Christ's mission is to be found in the miracles, the occurrence and the divine origin of which Locke, both here and in the paper on Miracles published among his Posthumous Works, appears to have thought it impossible to gain-say. "The miracles he did were so ordered by the divine providence and wisdom, that they never were nor could be denied by any of the enemies or opposers of Christianity." And "this plain matter of fact being granted, the truth of our Saviour's doctrine and mission unavoidably follows." But once acknowledge the truth of Christ's mission, and the rule of life is evident. "To one who is once persuaded that Jesus Christ was sent by God to be a King, and a Saviour of those who do believe in him, all his commands become principles; there needs no other proof for the truth of what he says, but that he said it. And then there needs no more, but to read the inspired books, to be instructed; all the duties of morality lie there clear, and plain, and easy to be understood."

This, then, is Locke's scheme of a plain and reasonable Christianity. "These are articles that the labouring and illiterate man may comprehend. This is a religion suited to vulgar capacities, and the state of mankind in this world, destined to labour and travail." "The writers and wranglers in religion," indeed, "fill it with niceties,

and dress it up with notions, which they make necessary and fundamental parts of it, as if there were no way into the church, but through the academy or lyceum," but the religion which he had enunciated was, Locke conceived, the religion of Christ and the Apostles, of the New Testament and of Common-Sense.

That Locke, though he had no respect for the dogmas of the Church, never seriously questioned the supernatural birth of Christ, the reality of the Christian miracles, or the infallibility of the Scriptures, is abundantly evident. On the last point his testimony is quite as emphatic as on the two former. In the *Reasonableness of Christianity*, speaking of the writers of the Epistles, he says :—"These holy writers, inspired from above, writ nothing but truth." And, to the same effect, in his Second Reply to Stillingfleet, he writes :—"My lord, I read the revelation of the holy scripture with a full assurance that all it delivers is true." The word "infallible" is applied, without any misgiving or qualification, to the contents of Scripture, though he assumes to each individual believer full liberty of interpretation. During his residence in Holland, as we have already seen, he appears to have entertained some doubts on this subject, but, at a later period, those doubts appear to have been finally laid.

Notwithstanding, however, the sincerity and simplicity of Locke's religious faith, the doctrines which he maintained must have represented but a very attenuated Christianity to the partisans of the two great religious parties which were at that time nominally the strongest in England. A Christianity which did not recognize the hereditary taint of original sin, and which passed over the mystery of the Atonement in silence, must have been as distasteful to one party as a Christianity which ignored

Church authority and the exclusive privileges of the apostolical succession must have been to the other. And to the zealots of both parties alike, a statement of doctrine which was silent on the mystery of the Trinity, or rather which seemed to imply that the Son, though miraculously conceived, was not co-equal or co-eternal with the Father, and which, by implication, appeared to suggest that, though the righteous would be endowed with immortality, the torments of the wicked would have an end, might well seem not to deserve the name of Christianity at all. We need feel no wonder, then, that the appearance of Locke's work was followed by a bitter theological controversy which lasted during the rest of his life, and beyond it. Of these attacks upon him, and his *Vindications*, I have spoken in a previous chapter.

Whether Locke's presentation of Christianity is really more "reasonable" than the ancient and venerable creeds which it attempted to replace, is a question which might be debated now with fully as much vigour as in his own day. On the one hand, it might be maintained that a religion which has no mysteries, which has been pared down to the requirements of human reason, has ceased to be a religion altogether. That which is behind the veil can only be partially revealed in our present condition and to our present faculties. Now we know, and can know, only in part. On the other hand, it might be said that the "reason" is quite as much offended by the doctrines which Locke retained as by those which he rejected. It is necessary, however, to recollect, in estimating his position, that the theological difficulties of his age were moral and metaphysical rather than scientific and critical. The moral consciousness of many reflecting men was shocked by doctrines like those of original sin, predestina-

tion, the atonement, and everlasting punishment. Nor could they reconcile to their reason the seeming contradictions of the doctrine of a Triune God. But the study of nature had not advanced sufficiently far, or been sufficiently widely spread, to make the idea of supernatural intervention in the ordinary course of affairs, such as is constantly presented to us in the Biblical history, any serious or general stumbling-block. Much less had the criticism of the Sacred Text, or the comparison of it with the sacred books of other religions, become sufficiently common, or been carried out with sufficient rigour, to disturb, to any great extent, the received opinion that the Bible was literally, or, at least, substantially, the Word of God. Hence, the *via media* on which Locke took his stand, though it might have been impossible to a philosopher of the next generation, seemed reasonable and natural enough to speculative men among his contemporaries. And for him it had at least this advantage, that it enabled him honestly to reconcile the conclusions of his philosophy with the singular piety and devoutness of his disposition. Had his religious doubts proceeded further than they did, there would probably have ensued a mental struggle which, besides causing him much personal unhappiness, might have deprived posterity of the more important of his works.

Of *The Letters on Toleration*, though deeply interesting to the generation in which they were written, a very brief account will here suffice. Their main thesis is, that the jurisdiction of the civil magistrate does not extend to the regulation of religious worship or to controlling the expression of religious beliefs, except so far as that worship or those beliefs may interfere

with the ends of civil government. The respective provinces of a commonwealth and a church are strictly defined, and are shown to be perfectly distinct. "The boundaries on both sides are fixed and immovable. He jumbles heaven and earth together, the things most remote and opposite, who mixes these societies, which are in their orginal, end, business, and in everything, perfectly distinct and infinitely different from each other." But it may be asked, are there no speculative opinions, no tenets, actual or possible, of any religious community which should be restrained by the Civil Magistrate? The answer is, yes,—

"First, No opinions contrary to human society, or to those moral rules which are necessary to the preservation of civil society, are to be tolerated by the magistrate."

Secondly, after speaking of those who maintain such positions as that "faith is not to be kept with heretics," that "kings excommunicated forfeit their crowns and kingdoms," that "dominion is founded in grace," he proceeds:

"These, therefore, and the like, who attribute unto the faithful, religious, and orthodox, that is, in plain terms, unto themselves, any peculiar privilege or power above other mortals in civil concernments, or who, upon pretence of religion, do challenge any manner of authority over such as are not associated with them in their ecclesiastical communion: I say these have no right to be tolerated by the magistrate, as neither those that will not own and teach the duty of tolerating all men in matters of mere religion. For what do all these and the like doctrines signify, but that they may, and are ready upon any occasion to seize the government, and possess themselves of the estates and fortunes of their fellow-subjects, and that they only ask leave to be tolerated by the magistrates so long until they find themselves strong enough to effect it?"

"Thirdly, That church can have no right to be tolerated by the magistrate, which is constituted upon such a bottom that all those who enter upon it do thereby ipso facto deliver themselves up to the protection and service of another prince. For by this means the magistrate would give way to the settling of a foreign jurisdiction in his own country, and suffer his own people to be listed, as it were, for soldiers against his own government."

"Lastly, Those are not at all to be tolerated who deny the being of God. Promises, covenants, and oaths, which are the bonds of human society, can have no hold upon an atheist. The taking away of God, though but even in thought, dissolves all."

The practical result of Locke's exceptions, at the time at which he wrote, would have been to exclude from toleration Roman Catholics, Atheists, and perhaps certain sects of Antinomians. Roman Catholics, however, would not have been excluded on the ground of their belief in Transubstantiation, as was actually the case, but because of those tenets which, in Locke's judgment, made them bad or impossible subjects.

Locke was not, by any means, the first of English writers who had advocated a wide toleration in religion. Bacon, in his remarkable *Essay on Unity in Religion*, had laid down, in passing, a position which is almost identical with that developed at length in the *Letters on Toleration*. During the Civil Wars, the Independents, as a body, had been led on by their theories of Church Government and of individual inspiration to maintain, on principle, and accord, in practice, a large, measure of religious toleration. Amongst divines of the Church of England, Hales of Eton, Chillingworth, and Jeremy Taylor, had honourably distinguished themselves above the mass of their brethren by expressly advocating, or unmistakably suggesting, the same humane doctrines.

The practical conclusions at which Taylor arrives in his noble work on the *Liberty of Prophesying* bear a close resemblance to those of Locke's *Letters on Toleration*, while the theoretical considerations on which he mainly founds them, namely, the difficulty of discovering religious truth and the small number of theological propositions of which we can entertain anything like certainty, might be regarded as anticipating, to no small extent, some of the views expressed in the *Reasonableness of Christianity*. Locke's attention had been turned to these questions at an early period of his life by the religious dissensions which accompanied the Civil Wars, and, during the years immediately preceding the publication of the first *Letter on Toleration*, his interest in them must have been sustained not only by the events which were then happening in England but by the common topics of conversation amongst his Arminian or Remonstrant friends in Holland. The peculiarities of their position and the tendencies of their doctrines had, at an early date, forced on the Dutch Remonstrants, just as on the English Independents, the necessity of claiming and defending a wide toleration. What, perhaps, mainly distinguishes Locke's pamphlets is their thorough outspokenness, the political rather than the theological character of the argument, and the fact that they are expressly dedicated to the subject of Toleration, instead of treating of it incidentally.

The sharp line of demarcation which Locke draws between the respective provinces of civil and religious communities seems to lead logically to the inexpediency of maintaining a state establishment of religion. The independence which he claims for all religious societies would be inconsistent with the control which the State

always has exercised, and always must exercise, in the affairs of any spiritual body on which it confers special privileges. This conclusion, we can hardly doubt, he would have readily accepted. As far back as 1669, he had objected to one of the articles in the "Fundamental Constitutions of Carolina," providing for the establishment and endowment of the Church of England in that colony. Even at the present day, men who adopt the most liberal and tolerant opinions on religious questions are divided as to the expediency or inexpediency of recognizing a State-Church, but those who embrace the latter alternative may, perhaps, fairly claim Locke as having been on their side.

The system contained in the *Reasonableness of Christianity* had been constructed solely on an examination of the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. In addition to the difficulties of interpretation attaching to the Epistles, Locke had urged that "they were writ to them who were in the faith and true Christians already, and so could not be designed to teach them the fundamental articles and points necessary to salvation." But to one who accepted the divine inspiration and infallibility of all parts of Scripture, it was essential to establish the consistency and coherence of the whole. Accordingly, in the later years of his life, Locke set himself the task of explaining the Epistles. This work seems to have been undertaken more for his own satisfaction and that of Lady Masham and his more immediate friends, than with any distinct design of publication. Nor did his commentaries see the light till after his death.

The commentatorial work accomplished by Locke consists of paraphrases and notes on the Epistles to the

Galatians, Corinthians, Romans, and Ephesians, together with *An Essay for the understanding of St. Paul's Epistles by consulting St. Paul himself.*

It is needless to remark that these commentaries are distinguished by sound, clear sense, and by a manifest spirit of candour and fairness. They are often quoted with approbation by commentators of the last century. But in the present more advanced state of grammatical and historical criticism, they are likely to remain, as they now are, the least consulted of all his works.

The method, object, and drift of all Locke's theological writings is the same. Regardless of ecclesiastical tradition, but assuming the infallibility of the Scriptures, he attempts to arrive at the true and essential import of God's Revelation to man. His theoretical conclusion is that the articles of saving faith are few and simple, and the practical application of that conclusion is that, not only within the ample fold of Christianity, but even without it, all men, whose conduct is consistent with the maintenance of civil society, should be the objects of our good-will and charity.

CHAPTER X.

THE THOUGHTS ON EDUCATION AND THE CONDUCT OF THE UNDERSTANDING.

Locke's tractate on Education, though some of the maxims are reiterated with needless prolixity, abounds in shrewdness and common-sense. Taking as the object of education the production of "a sound mind in a sound body," he begins with the "case," the "clay-cottage," and considers first the health of the body. Of the diet prescribed, dry bread and small beer form a large proportion. Locke is a great believer in the virtues of cold water. Coddling, in all its forms, was to be repressed with a strong hand. My young master was to be much in the open air, he was to play in the wind and the sun without a hat, his clothes were not to be too warm, and his bed was to be hard and made in different fashions, that he might not in after-life feel every little change, when there was no maid "to lay all things in print, and tuck him in warm."

In the cultivation of the mind, far more importance is attached to the formation of virtuous habits and even of those social qualities which go by the name of "good breeding" than to the mere inculcation of knowledge. "I place Virtue as the first and most necessary of those endowments that belong to a Man or a Gentleman; as absolutely requisite to make him valued and beloved by others,

acceptable or tolerable to himself." Wisdom, that is to say, "a man's managing his business ably, and with foresight, in this world," comes next in order. In the third place is Good Breeding, the breaches of which may be all avoided by "observing this one rule, Not to think meanly of ourselves, and not to think meanly of others." Learning, though "this may seem strange in the mouth of a bookish man," he puts last. "When I consider what ado is made about a little Latin and Greek, how many years are spent in it, and what a noise and business it makes to no purpose, I can hardly forbear thinking that the parents of children still live in fear of the Schoolmaster's Rod." "Seek out some body that may know how discreetly to frame your child's manners: place him in hands where you may, as much as possible, secure his innocence, cherish and nurse up the good, and gently correct and weed out any bad inclinations, and settle in him good habits. This is the main point, and, this being provided for, Learning may be had into the bargain, and that, as I think" (a very common delusion among the educational reformers of Locke's time), "at a very easy rate, by methods that may be thought on."

These being Locke's ideas as to the relative value of the objects to be aimed at in education, we need feel little surprise at the disfavour with which he viewed the system of the English Public Schools.

"Till you can find a School, wherein it is possible for the Master to look after the manners of his scholars, and can show as great efforts of his care of forming their minds to virtue and their carriage to good breeding as of forming their tongues to the learned languages, you must confess that you have a strange value for words when, preferring the languages of the ancient Greeks and Romans to that which made 'em such brave

men, you think it worth while to hazard your son's innocence and virtue for a little Greek and Latin. How any one's being put into a mixed herd of unruly boys, and there learning to wrangle at Trap or rook at Span-Farthing fits him for civil conversation or business, I do not see. And what qualities are ordinarily to be got from such a troop of Play-fellows as Schools usually assemble together from parents of all kinds, that a father should so much covet; is hard to divine. I am sure he who is able to be at the charge of a Tutor at home may there give his son a more genteel carriage, more manly thoughts, and a sense of what is worthy and becoming, with a greater proficiency in Learning into the bargain, and ripen him up sooner into a man, than any at School can do."

The battle of private and public education has been waged more or less fiercely ever since Locke's time, as it was waged long before, and, although it has now been generally decided in favour of the Schools, many of his arguments have even yet not lost their force.

Not only in the interest of morality, character, and manners did Locke disapprove the Public School system of his day. He also thought it essentially defective in its subjects and modes of instruction. The subjects taught were almost exclusively the Latin and Greek languages, though at Locke's own school of Westminster the upper forms were also initiated into Hebrew and Arabic. This linguistic training, though of course it included translations from the classical authors, was to a large extent carried on by means of verse-making, theme-making, repetition, and grammar lessons. Against all these modes of teaching Locke is peculiarly severe. Grammar indeed he would have taught, but not till the pupil is sufficiently conversant with the language to be able to speak it with tolerable fluency. Its proper place is as an introduction to Rhetoric. "I know not why any one should waste his

time and beat his head about the Latin Grammar, who does not intend to be a critic, or make speeches and write despatches in it. . . . If his use of it be only to understand some books writ in it, without a critical knowledge of the tongue itself, reading alone will attain this end, without charging the mind with the multiplied rules and intricacies of Grammar." But without a knowledge of some rules of grammar, which need not, however, be taught in an abstract and separate form, but may be learnt gradually in the course of reading, writing, and speaking, how would it be possible to attain to any precise understanding of the authors read? The fault of the old system, which even still lingers on in school instruction, consisted not so much in teaching grammatical rules, as in teaching them apart from the writings which exemplify them, and which alone can render them intelligible or interesting to a beginner.

The practice of filling up a large part of a boy's time with making Latin themes and verses meets with still more scathing censure than that of initiating him into the learned languages by means of abstract rules of grammar, and we may well imagine the cordial assent with which many of Locke's readers, smarting under a sense of the time they had in this way lost at school, would receive his criticisms.

"For do but consider what it is in making a Theme that a young lad is employed about; it is to make a speech on some Latin saying, as *Omnia vincit amor*, or *Non licet in bello bis peccare*, &c. And here the poor lad, who wants knowledge of those things he is to speak of, which is to be had only from time and observation, must set his invention on the rack to say something where he knows nothing; which is a sort of Egyptian tyranny to bid them make bricks who have not yet any of the materials. In the next place consider the

Language that their Themes are made in. 'Tis Latin, a language foreign in their country, and long since dead everywhere: a language which your son, 'tis a thousand to one, shall never have an occasion once to make a speech in as long as he lives after he comes to be a man; and a language wherein the manner of expressing one's self is so far different from ours that to be perfect in that would very little improve the purity and facility of his English style."

"If these may be any reasons against children's making Latin Themes at school, I have much more to say, and of more weight, against their making verses; verses of any sort. For if he has no genius to poetry, 'tis the most unreasonable thing in the world to torment a child and waste his time about that which can never succeed; and if he have a poetic vein, 'tis to me the strangest thing in the world that the father should desire or suffer it to be cherished or improved. Methinks the parents should labour to have it stifled and suppressed as much as may be; and I know not what reason a father can have to wish his son a poet, who does not desire to have him bid defiance to all other callings and business. Which is not yet the worst of the case; for if he proves a successful rhymer, and get once the reputation of a Wit, I desire it may be considered what company and places he is likely to spend his time in, nay, and estate too. For it is very seldom seen that any one discovers mines of gold or silver in Parnassus. 'Tis a pleasant air, but a barren soil; and there are very few instances of those who have added to their patrimony by anything they have reaped from thence. Poetry and Gaming, which usually go together, are alike in this too, that they seldom bring any advantage but to those who have nothing else to live on."

Repetition, as it is called, or "learning by heart great parcels of the authors which are taught," is unreservedly condemned as being of "no use at all, unless it be to baulk young lads in the way to learning languages, which, in my opinion, should be made as easy and pleasant as may be." "Languages are to be learned only by reading

and talking, and not by scraps of authors got by heart; which when a man's head is stuffed with, he has got the just furniture of a pedant, than which there is nothing less becoming a gentleman." This unqualified condemnation of the practice of committing to memory the choicer pieces of classical authors, whether in the ancient or modern languages, would hardly be adopted by the educational reformers of our own day. To tax the memory of a child or a boy with long strings of words, ill understood or not understood at all, is about as cruel and senseless a practice as can well be conceived. It is one of the strange devices, invented by perverse pedagogues and tolerated by ignorant parents, through which literature and all that is connected with books has been made so repulsive to many generations of young Englishmen. But, if the tastes and interests of the pupil are skilfully consulted, and the understanding is called into action as well as the memory, a store of well-selected passages learnt by rote will not only do much to familiarize him with the genius of the language, but will also supply constant solace and occupation in those moments of depression and vacuity which are only too sure to occur in every man's life.

Locke, like Milton (see Milton's Pamphlet on Education addressed to Master Samuel Hartlib, and cp. Pattison's *Life of Milton*, published in this series, pp. 45—49), had embraced the new gospel of education according to Comenius, and supposed that, by new methods, not only might the road to knowledge be rendered very short and easy, but almost all the subjects worth learning might be taught in the few years spent at School and College. The whole of Milton's "complete and generous education" was to be "done between twelve and one-and-twenty."

And similarly Locke thinks that "at the same time that a child is learning French and Latin, he may also be entered in Arithmetic, Geography, Chronology, History, and Geometry too. For if these be taught him in French or Latin, when he begins once to understand either of these tongues, he will get a knowledge in these sciences and the language to boot." To these subjects are afterwards added Astronomy, Ethics, Civil and Common Law, Natural Philosophy, and almost all the then known branches of human knowledge, though, curiously enough, Greek is omitted as not being, like Latin and French, essential to the education of a gentleman, and being, moreover, easy of acquisition, "if he has a mind to carry his studies farther," in after-life. Concurrently with these intellectual pursuits, the model young gentleman is to graduate in dancing, fencing, wrestling, riding, besides (and on this addition to his accomplishments the utmost stress is laid) "learning a trade, a manual trade, nay, two or three, but one more particularly." And all this programme apparently was to be filled up before the age of one-and-twenty, for at that time Locke assumes that, notwithstanding all reasons and remonstrances to the contrary, my young master's parents will insist on marrying him, and "the young gentleman being got within view of matrimony, 'tis time to leave him to his mistress." This idea of an education embracing the whole field of human knowledge and accomplishments is a vision so attractive, that it would be strange indeed if it did not from time to time present itself to the enthusiast and the reformer. But, wherever the experiment has been tried on boys or youths of average strength and ability, the vision has invariably been dissipated. And, as the circle of human knowledge is constantly widening, whereas the capacity to learn

remains much the same from generation to generation, the failure is inevitable.

Any account of Locke's views on Education, however meagre, would be very imperfect, if it neglected to notice the motives to obedience and proficiency which he proposed to substitute for what was then too often the one and only motive on which the Schoolmaster relied, fear of the rod. Corporal chastisement should be reserved, he thought, for the offence of wilful and obstinate disobedience. In all other cases, appeal should be made to the pupil's natural desire of employment and knowledge, to example acting through his propensity to imitation, to reasoning, to the sense of shame and the love of commendation and reputation. Many of Locke's suggestions for bringing these motives effectually to bear are very ingenious, and the whole of this part of the discussion is as creditable to his humanity as to his knowledge of human nature.

There is a large literature on the theory of education from the Book of Proverbs and the *Republic* of Plato downwards. It is no part of my task even to mention the principal writers in this field. But, besides some of the works of Comenius, the Essay of Montaigne *De l'institution des enfants*, and the tractate of Milton already referred to, we may almost take for granted that Locke had read the *Schoolmaster* of Roger Ascham. This author, who was instructor to Queen Elizabeth, is already sufficiently independent of scholastic traditions, to think that "children are sooner allured by love, than driven by beating, to attain good learning," and to suggest that "there is no such whetstone to sharpen a good wit, and encourage a will to learning, as is praise." He protests almost as strongly as Locke against the senseless

mode, then and long afterwards prevalent, of teaching grammar merely by means of abstract rules, and proposes, as in part substitute, the method of double translation, that is of translating from the foreign or dead language into English, and then back again. Of the many works on education subsequent to Locke's, the most famous is, undoubtedly, the *Emile* of Rousseau. On Rousseau's theories there can be no question that Locke, mediately or immediately, exercised considerable influence, though the range of speculation covered in the *Emile* far exceeds that of the *Thoughts concerning Education*. Of the points common to the two writers, I may specify the extension of the term "education" to the regulations of the nursery, the substitution of an appeal to the tender and the social affections for the harsh discipline mostly in vogue among our ancestors, the stress laid on the importance of example and habituation in place of the mere inculcation of rules, and, as a point of detail, the desirableness of learning one or more manual trades. One circumstance, however, as Mr. Morley has pointed out, distinguishes the *Emile* from all the works on education which preceded it. Its scope is not confined to the children of well-to-do people, and hence its object is to produce, not the scholar and the gentleman, but the man. The democratic extension thus given to educational theories has since borne fruit in many schemes designed for general applicability, or, specifically, for the education of the poor, such as those of Basedow, Pestalozzi, and, among our own countrymen, Dr. Bell.

In connexion with the *Thoughts on Education*, it may be convenient to notice the short treatise on the *Conduct of the Understanding*. It is true that it was designed

as an additional chapter to the *Essay*, but the main theme of which it treats is connected rather with the work of self-education than with the analysis of knowledge, or the classification of the faculties. This admirable little volume, which may be read through in three or four hours, appears to have been intended by Locke as at least a partial substitute for the ordinary logic. As in matters of conduct, so in the things of the intellect, he thought little of rules. It was only by practice and habituation that men could become either virtuous or wise. But, though it is perfectly true that rules are of little use without practice, it is not easy to see how habit can be successfully initiated or fostered without the assistance of rules; and inadequate as were the rules of the old scholastic logic to remedy the "natural defects in the understanding," they required rather to be supplemented than replaced. The views of Bacon on this subject, much as they have been misunderstood, are juster than those of Locke.

Right reasoning, Locke thought (and this is nearly the whole truth, though not altogether so), is to be gained from studying good models of it. In the *Thoughts on Education*, he says, "If you would have your son reason well, let him read Chillingworth." In this treatise, with the same view he commends the study of Mathematics, "not that I think it necessary that all men should be deep mathematicians, but that, having got the way of reasoning which that study necessarily brings the mind to, they might be able to transfer it to other parts of knowledge, as they shall have occasion." The great difference to be observed in demonstrative and in probable reasoning is that, in the former one train of reasoning, "bringing the mind to the source on which it bottoms,"

is sufficient, whereas "in probabilities it is not enough to trace one argument to its source, and observe its strength and weakness, but all the arguments, after having been so examined on both sides, must be laid in balance one against another, and, upon the whole, the understanding determine its assent."

The great defect of this tractate (but its brevity makes the defect of less importance) is its singular want of method. In fact, it appears never to have undergone revision. The author seems to throw together his remarks and precepts without any attempt at order, and he never misses any opportunity of repeating his attacks on what he evidently regarded as being, in his own time, the main hindrances to the acquisition of a sound understanding,—prejudice and pedantry. But in justness of observation, incisiveness of language, and profound acquaintance with the workings of the human mind, there are many passages which will bear comparison with anything he has written. Specially worthy of notice is the homely and forcible character of many of his expressions, as when he speaks of a "large, sound, roundabout sense," of "men without any industry or acquisition of their own, inheriting local truths," of great readers "making their understanding only the warehouse of other men's lumber," of the ruling passion entering the mind, like "the sheriff of the place, with all the posse, as if it had a legal right to be alone considered there."

Except for the inveterate and growing custom of confining works employed in education to such as can be easily lectured on and easily examined in, it is difficult to understand why this "student's guide," so brief and abounding in such valuable cautions and suggestions, should have so nearly fallen into desuetude.

CHAPTER XI.

WORKS ON GOVERNMENT, TRADE, AND FINANCE.

LOCKE's two *Treatises of Government* (published in 1690) carry us back into the region of worn-out controversies. The troublous times which intervened between the outbreak of the Civil War and the Revolution of 1688, including some years on either side, naturally called forth a large amount of controversy and controversial literature on the rights of kings and subjects, on the origin of government, on the point at which, if any, rebellion is justifiable, and other kindred topics. Not only did the press teem with pamphlets on these subjects, but, for three-quarters of a century, they were constantly being discussed and re-discussed with a dreary monotony in parliament, in the pulpits, in the courts of law, and in the intercourse of private society. It is no part of my plan to give any account of these disputes, except so far as they bear immediately on the publication of Locke's treatises. It is enough, therefore, to state that the despotic and absolutist side in the controversy had been, or was supposed to have been, considerably re-inforced by the appearance in 1680 of a posthumous work, which had been circulated only in manuscript during its author's life time, entitled *Patriarcha or the Natural Power of Kings*, by Sir Robert Filmer. This curious book (a more correct

edition of which was published by Edmund Bohun in 1685) grounds the rights of kings on the patriarchal authority of Adam and his successors. Adam had received directly from God (such was the theory) absolute dominion over Eve and all his children and their posterity, to the most remote generations. This dominion, which rested on two independent grounds, paternity and right of property, was transmitted by Adam to his heirs, and is at once the justification of the various sovereignties now exercised by kings over their subjects, and a reason against any limitation of their authority or any questioning of their titles. By what ingenious contrivances the two links of the chain, Adam and the several monarchs now actually reigning on the earth, are brought together, those curious in such speculations may find by duly consulting the pages of Sir Robert Filmer's work.

Such a tissue of contradictions, assumptions, and absurdities as is presented by this book (which, however, contains one grain of truth, namely, that all political power has, historically, its ultimate origin in the dominion exercised by the head of the family or tribe) might have been left, one would think, without any serious answer. But we must recollect that, at that time, theological arguments were introduced into all the provinces of thought, and that any reason, which by any supposition could be connected with the authority of Scripture, was certain to exercise considerable influence over a vast number of minds. Any way, the book was celebrated and influential enough to merit, in Locke's judgment, a detailed answer. This answer was given in due form, step by step, in the former of Locke's two *Treatises*, which appears to have been written between 1680 and 1685, as the Edition of the *Patriarcha* quoted is invariably that of 1680. I do not

propose to follow him through his various arguments and criticisms, many of which, as will readily be supposed, are acute and sagacious enough. Most modern readers will be of opinion that one of his questions might alone have sufficed to spare him any further concern, namely, Where is Adam's heir now to be found? If he could be shown, and his title indubitably proved, the subsequent question of his rights and prerogatives might then, perhaps, be profitably discussed.

Of incomparably more importance and interest than the former treatise, is the latter, in which Locke sets forth his own theory concerning "the true original, extent, and end of Civil Government." Mr. Fox Bourne is probably correct in referring the date of the composition of this treatise to the time immediately preceding and concurrent with the English Revolution, that is to say, to the closing period of Locke's stay in Holland. The work, especially in the later chapters, bears the marks of passion, as if written in the midst of a great political struggle, and, in the Preface to the two *Treatises*, it is distinctly stated to be the author's object "to establish the throne of our great restorer, our present King William, and to justify to the world the people of England, whose love of their just and natural rights saved the nation when it was on the very brink of slavery and ruin."

The theories advanced by Locke on the origin and nature of civil society have much in common with those of Puffendorf and Hooker, the latter of whom is constantly quoted in the foot-notes. After some preliminary speculations on the "state of nature," he determines that Political Society originates solely in the individual consents of those who constitute it. This consent, however, may be signified either expressly or tacitly, and the tacit consent

"reaches as far as the very being of any one within the territories of that government."

Though no man need enter a political society against his will, yet when, by consent given either expressly or tacitly, he has entered it, he must submit to the form of government established by the majority. There is, however, one form of government which it is not competent even to the majority to establish, and that is Absolute Monarchy, this being "inconsistent with civil society, and so being no form of government at all." Locke ridicules the idea that men would ever voluntarily have erected over themselves such an authority, "as if, when men quitting the state of nature entered into society, they agreed that all of them but one should be under the restraint of laws, but that he should still retain all the liberty of the state of nature, increased with power and made licentious by impunity. This is to think that men are so foolish, that they take care to avoid what mischiefs may be done them by pole-cats or foxes, but are content, nay, think it safety, to be devoured by lions." In these and some of the following strictures, he seems to have in view not only the ruder theories of Filmer and the absolutist divines, but also the more philosophical system of Hobbes.

But, supposing a government other than an Absolute Monarchy to have been established, are there any acts or omissions by which it can forfeit the allegiance of its subjects? To answer this question, we must look to the ends of political society and government. Now the great and chief end which men propose to themselves, when they unite into commonwealths, is "the mutual preservation of their lives, liberties, and estates, which I call by the general name, property." A government, there-

fore, which neglects to secure this end, and still more a government which itself invades the rights of its subjects, is guilty of a breach of trust, and consequently may be lawfully set aside, whenever an opportunity occurs. Hence, the community itself must always be regarded as the supreme authority, in abeyance indeed while its fiduciary properly and faithfully executes the powers entrusted to him, but ever ready to intervene, when he misuses or betrays the trust reposed in him.

On such a theory, it may be objected, of the relations of the people to the government, what is to prevent incessant disturbance and repeated revolutions? Locke relies on the inertia of mankind. Moreover, as he says, with considerable truth, in a previous passage, whatever theories may be propounded, or whatever traditions may have been handed down, as to the origin, nature, and extent of government, a people, which knows itself to be rendered miserable by the faults of its rulers and which sees any chance of bettering its condition, will not be deterred from attempting to throw off a yoke which has become intolerable. "When the people are made miserable, and find themselves exposed to the ill-usage of arbitrary power, cry up their governors, as much as you will, for sons of Jupiter; let them be sacred and divine, descended or authorized from heaven; give them out for whom or what you please, the same will happen. The people generally ill-treated, and contrary to right, will be ready upon any occasion to ease themselves of a burden that sits heavy upon them."

But, though there is much truth in this last remark, there can be little question that absolutist theories of government, especially when clothed with a religious sanction which appeals to the beliefs of the people at large,

have much influence in protecting the person of an absolute ruler, as well as in ensuring the execution of his orders; while, on the other hand, theories like those of Locke have a tendency to encourage criticism and to weaken many of the motives which have usually prevented men from offering resistance to the established government. The practical consequences of Locke's theories, as reproduced and improved on by later writers, would probably be found, if we could trace them, to be represented, in no inconsiderable degree, in the French and American revolutions which occurred about a century after the publication of the Treatises. Nor have his speculations been without their share, probably, in determining much of the political history and still more of the political sentiment of our own country. To maintain that kings have a divine right to misgovern their subjects, or to deny that the people are, in the last resort, the supreme arbiters of the fate of their rulers, are paradoxes which, to Englishmen of our generation, would appear not so much dangerous as foolish. This altered state of sentiment and the good fruit it has borne in the improved relations between the Legislature and the People, the Crown and the Parliament, may, without undue partiality, be ascribed, at least in some measure, to the generous spirit of liberty which warms our author's pages, and to the Whig tradition which so long cherished his doctrines, till at last they became the common heritage of the English people.

Admirable, however, as, in most respects, are the parts of Locke's treatise which discuss the present relations of governors and governed, his conception of the remote origin of political society is radically false. "The first framers of the government," "the original frame of the government" (ch. xiii.) have never had any existence

except in the minds of jurists and publicists. In the primitive stages of human development, governments, like languages, are not made; they grow. The observation of primitive communities still existing, combined with the more intelligent study of ancient history, has led recent writers to adopt a wholly different view of the *origin* of government (the question of the respective *rights* of governors and governed is not affected) from that which prevailed in the times of Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau. The family or the tribe (according to different theories) is the original unit of society. Government, therefore, of some kind or other must always have existed, and the "state of nature" is a mere fiction. In course of time, the family or the tribe, by a natural process of development, would, in many cases, become greatly enlarged or combine with other units like itself. Out of this growth or aggregation would arise, in most cases gradually and insensibly, the nation or state as known to later history. The constitution, the "frame of government," has generally passed through stages similar to those passed through by the state or nation. A body of custom must gradually have grown up even in the most primitive societies. The "customs" would be interpreted and so administered by the house-father or head of the tribe. But, as the family or tribe changed its abode, or had to carry on its existence under different circumstances, or became enlarged, or combined with other families or tribes, the customs would necessarily be modified, often insensibly and unconsciously. Moreover, the house-father or head of the tribe might be compelled or might find it expedient to act in concert with others, either as equals or subordinates, in interpreting the customs, in taking measures of defence, in directing military operations, or in providing for the various exigencies of the common

life. Here there is no formal assent of the governed to the acts of the governors, in our sense of those terms, though, undoubtedly, the whole family or tribe, or its stronger members, might on rare occasions substitute one head for another; no passage from the "state of nature" to political society; no definitely constituted "frame of government." At a further stage, no doubt, political constitutions were discussed and framed, but this stage was long posterior to the period in the progress of society at which men are supposed to have quitted the state of nature, selected their form of government, and entered into an express contract with one another to obey and maintain it. The fault of Locke, like that of the other political speculators of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, consisted in assuming that primitive man was impelled by the same motives, and acted in the same manner and with the same deliberate design, as the men of his own generation. As in morals and psychology, so in politics, the historical and comparative methods, so familiar to recent investigators, were as yet hardly known.

I ought not to dismiss this book, without noticing Locke's remarks on the necessity of Parliamentary Reform. "To what gross absurdities the following of custom, when reason has left it, may lead, we may be satisfied when we see the bare name of a town, of which there remains not so much as the ruins, where scarce so much housing as a sheepcote or more inhabitants than a shepherd is to be found, sends as many representatives to the grand assembly of law-makers as a whole county numerous in people and powerful in riches."

The writings of Locke on Trade and Finance are

chiefly interesting to us on account of the place which they occupy in the History of Political Economy. They consist of three tracts, the occasions and consequences of which have already been described. The main positions which he endeavours to establish are three. First, interest, or the price of the hire of money, cannot, ordinarily speaking, be regulated by law, and, if it could so be regulated, its reduction below the natural or market rate would be injurious to the interests of the public. Secondly, as silver and gold are commodities not differing intrinsically in their nature from other commodities, it is impossible by arbitrary acts of the Government to raise the value of silver and gold coins. You may indeed enjoin by Act of Parliament that sixpence shall henceforth be called a shilling, but, all the same, it will only continue to purchase sixpenny-worth of goods. You will soon find that the new shilling is only as effective in the market as the old sixpence, and hence, if the Government has taken the difference, it has simply robbed its subjects to that amount. The third position, which he only maintains incidentally in discussing the other two, is that the commercial prosperity of a country is to be measured by the excess of its exports over its imports, or, as the phrase then went, by the balance of trade. The two former of these propositions are simple, but long-disputed, economical truths. The latter is an obstinate and specious economical fallacy.

To understand Locke's contention on the first point, it must be borne in mind that in his time, and down even to the middle of the present reign, the maximum rate of interest allowable in all ordinary transactions was fixed by law. By the statute 12 Car. II. (passed in 1660) it had been reduced from eight to six per cent. Sir Josiah Child, whose

Observations concerning Trade had been reprinted in 1690, and who probably represented a very large amount of mercantile opinion, advocated its further reduction to four per cent. He maintained, quoting the example of Holland, that low interest is the cause of national wealth, and that, consequently, to lower the legal rate of interest would be to take a speedy and simple method of making the country richer. Against this proposal Locke argued that the example of Holland was entirely beside the question; that the low rate of interest in that country was owing to the abundance of ready money which it had formerly enjoyed, and not to any legal restrictions; nay, in the States there was no law limiting the rate of interest at all, every one being free to hire out his money for anything he could get for it, and the courts enforcing the bargain. But, further, suppose the proposed law to be enacted; what would be the consequences? It would be certain to be evaded, while, at the same time, it would hamper trade, by increasing the difficulty of borrowing and lending. Rather than lend at a low rate of interest, many men would hoard, and, consequently, much of the money, which would otherwise find its way into trade, would be intercepted, and the commerce of the country be proportionately lessened. Excellent as most of these arguments are, Locke unfortunately stopped short of the legitimate conclusion to be drawn from them. He did not propose, as he should have done, to sweep away the usury laws altogether, but simply to maintain the existing law fixing the maximum of interest at six per cent. Sir Dudley North, in his admirable pamphlet *Discourses on Trade*, published in 1691, just before the publication of the *Considerations*, but too late, perhaps, to have been seen by Locke, takes a much more consistent view as to

the expediency of legal restrictions on the rate of interest. "As touching interest of money, he is clear that it should be left freely to the market, and not be restrained by law." Notwithstanding the opposition of men like North and Locke, to whom may be added an earlier writer, Sir William Petty, the arguments of Child partially triumphed in the next reign. By the 12th of Anne, the legal rate of interest was reduced to five per cent., and so continued till the Act of 1854, repealing, with regard to all future transactions, the existing Usury Laws. There can be little doubt that public opinion had been prepared for this measure mainly through the publication of Bentham's powerful *Defence of Usury*, the telling arguments of which had gradually impressed themselves on the minds of statesmen and economists. Adam Smith, on the other hand, had stopped just where Locke did. "The legal rate of interest, though it ought to be somewhat above, ought not to be much above the lowest market rate." That the rate of interest, whatever it may be, should be fixed by law, he appears to take for granted. Indeed, he seems to write more confidently on this point than Locke had done, and, in this particular at least, appears to be of opinion that the legislator can look after the private interests of individuals better than they can look after their own. Happily, as Bentham points out, the refutation of this paradox was to be found in the general drift and spirit of his work.

On the second question, "raising the value of money," Locke's views are much clearer and more consistent than on the first. It would be impossible to state more explicitly than he has done the sound economical dictum that gold and silver are simply commodities, not differing essen-

tially from other commodities, and that the government stamp upon them, whereby they become coin, cannot materially raise their value. As most of my readers are aware, it has been a favourite device, time out of mind, of unprincipled and impecunious governments to raise the denomination of the coin, or to put a smaller quantity of the precious metals in coins retaining the old denomination, with the view of recruiting an impoverished exchequer. There have, doubtless, been financiers unintelligent enough to suppose that this expedient might enrich the government, while it did no harm to the people. But it requires only a slight amount of reflection to see that all creditors are defrauded exactly in the same proportion as that in which the coin is debased. One lucid passage from Locke's answer to Lowndes may suffice to show the forcible manner in which he presents this truth.

"Raising of coin is but a specious word to deceive the unwary. It only gives the usual denomination of a greater quantity of silver to a less (v. g. calling four grains of silver a penny to-day, when five grains of silver made a penny yesterday), but adds no worth or real value to the silver coin, to make amends for its want of silver. That is impossible to be done. For it is only the quantity of silver in it that is, and eternally will be, the measure of its value. One may as rationally hope to lengthen a foot, by dividing it into fifteen parts instead of twelve and calling them inches, as to increase the value of silver that is in a shilling, by dividing it into fifteen parts instead of twelve and calling them pence. This is all that is done, when a shilling is raised from twelve to fifteen pence."

Lowndes had maintained that "raising the coin," in addition to making up the loss caused by calling in the clipped money, and other advantages, would increase the circulating medium of the country, and so put a stop to the multiplication of hazardous paper-credit and the in-

conveniences of bartering. Nothing could be better than Locke's reply :—

"Just as the boy cut his leather into five quarters (as he called them) to cover his ball, when cut into four quarters it fell short, but, after all his pains, as much of his ball lay bare as before ; if the quantity of coined silver, employed in England, fall short, the arbitrary denomination of a greater number of pence given to it, or, which is all one, to the several coined pieces of it, will not make it commensurate to the size of our trade or the greatness of our occasions. This is as certain as that, if the quantity of a board, which is to stop a leak of a ship fifteen inches square, be but twelve inches square, it will not be made to do it by being measured by a foot that is divided into fifteen inches, instead of twelve, and so having a larger tale or number of inches in denomination given to it."

The general principle that to depreciate the coinage is to rob the creditor, and that, though you may change the name, you cannot change the thing, was quite as emphatically stated by Petty and North as by Locke. But the value of Locke's tracts consisted in their amplitude of argument and illustration, which left to the unprejudiced reader no alternative but to accept their conclusion. As he himself said in a letter to Molyneux, "Lay by the arbitrary names of pence and shillings, and consider and speak of it as grains and ounces of silver, and 'tis as easy as telling of twenty."

Locke had the penetration to see that the laws existing in his time against the exportation of gold and silver coin must necessarily be futile, and, while it was permitted to export bullion, could answer no conceivable purpose. These laws, which date from the time of Edward the Third, were, curiously enough, not repealed till the year 1819, though, as early as the time of the Restoration, they

had been pronounced by so competent a judge as Sir William Petty to be "nugatory" and "impracticable." Nothing, as Locke says towards the conclusion of his answer to Lowndes, could prevent the exportation of silver and gold in payment of debts contracted beyond the seas, and it could "be no odds to England whether it was carried out in specie or when melted down into bullion." But the principle on which the prohibition of exporting gold and silver coin ultimately rested seems to have been accepted by him as unhesitatingly as it was by almost all the other economists of the time. That principle was that the wealth of a nation is to be measured by the amount of gold and silver in its possession, this amount depending on the ratio of the value of the exports to that of the imports. When the value of the exports exceeded that of the imports, the Balance of Trade, as it was called, was said to be in favour of a country; when, on the other hand, the value of the imports exceeded that of the exports, the Balance of Trade was said to be against it. A favourable balance, it was assumed, must necessarily increase the amount of gold and silver in the country, while an unfavourable balance must necessarily diminish it. And, lastly, the amount of gold and silver in its possession was the measure of a nation's wealth. These views form part of what political economists call the Mercantile Theory, which it was the peculiar glory of Adam Smith to demolish.

It is somewhat humiliating to the biographer of Locke to be obliged to confess that, in this respect, his theories on trade lag considerably behind those of an almost contemporary writer, Sir Dudley North, whose work has already been mentioned. Some of North's maxims are worthy of Adam Smith, and one wonders that,

when once ennunciated, they found so little currency, and were so completely ignored in both the literature and the legislation of the time. Here are a few, but the whole tract may be read in less than an hour. "The whole world, as to trade, is but as one nation or people, and therein nations are as persons." "The loss of a trade with one nation is not that only, separately considered, but so much of the trade of the world rescinded and lost, for all is combined together." "No laws can set prices in trade, the rates of which must and will make themselves; but, when such laws do happen to lay any hold, it is so much impediment to trade, and therefore prejudicial." "No man is richer for having his estate all in money, plate, &c., lying by him, but, on the contrary, he is for that reason the poorer. That man is richest, whose estate is in a growing condition, either in land at farm, money at interest, or goods in trade." "Money exported in trade is an increase to the wealth of the nation; but spent in war and payments abroad, is so much impoverishment." "We may labour to iedge in the Cuckoo, but in vain; for no people ever yet grew rich by policies, but it is peace, industry, and freedom that brings trade and wealth, and nothing else."

Some of Locke's opinions on trade and finance were undoubtedly erroneous, and it must be confessed that the little tract of Sir Dudley North supplies a better summary of sound economical doctrine than any which we can find in his writings; but then this brochure is merely a summary, with little of argument or elucidation, and, perhaps, it would be difficult to point to any previous or contemporary writer, whose works are, on the whole, more important in the history of economical science than those of Locke.

CHAPTER XII.

LOCKE'S INFLUENCE ON THOUGHT.

To trace Locke's influence on subsequent speculation would be to write the History of Philosophy from his time to our own. In England, France, and Germany, there have been few writers on strictly philosophical questions in this century or the last who have not either quoted Locke's *Essay* with approbation or at least paid him the homage of stating their grounds for dissenting from it. In the last century, his other works, especially those on Government and Toleration, may be said to have almost formed the recognized code of liberal opinion in this country, besides exercising a considerable influence on the rapidly developing speculations which, in the middle of the century, were preparing an intellectual no less than a social revolution in France. I can here only speak of the nature of Locke's influence, and of the directions it took, in the very broadest outline, and it is the less necessary that I should enter into detail, as I have frequently adverted to it in the preceding chapters.

In England, the *Essay*, though from the first it had its ardent admirers, seemed, for some years after its appearance, to have produced its effect on English philosophical literature mainly by antagonism. Many were the critics who

attacked the "new way of ideas," and attempted to show the evil consequences to morals, religion, and exact thought which must follow from the acceptance of Locke's speculations. Here and there he was defended, but the attack certainly largely outnumbered the defence. Of these controversies I have already given some account in the chapters on Locke's Life, and need not, therefore, now recur to them. The first English writer on philosophy of the highest rank who succeeded Locke was Berkeley, and on him the influence of his predecessor is so distinctly apparent, that it may well be questioned whether Berkeley would ever have written the *Principles* and the *Dialogues*, if Locke had not written the *Essay*. Locke had regarded not "things" but "ideas" as the immediate objects of the mind in thinking, though he had supposed these ideas to be representative of things; but why, argued Berkeley, suppose "things" to exist, if "ideas" are the only objects which we perceive? Again, Locke had analyzed the idea of Matter conceived as "Substance" into "we know not what" support of known qualities. How, then, said Berkeley, do we know that it exists? The idealist philosophy of Berkeley may thus be viewed as a development, on one side, of the philosophy of Locke. But Hume, by carrying Berkeley's scepticism further than he had done himself, and by questioning the reality of Substance, as applied either to matter or mind, may be said to have developed Locke's principles in a direction which was practically the very reverse of that taken by Berkeley. For the result of Berkeley's denial of "matter" was to enhance the importance of "mind," and to re-assure men as to the existence of one all-embracing mind in the person of the Deity. But the result of the questions which Hume raised as to the substantial existence of either Matter or

Mind was to leave men in a state of pure scepticism, or, as we should now perhaps call it, Agnosticism. On the other applications of Hume's method, I need not detain the reader. To the ordinary common-sense Englishman, who approached philosophical questions with interest but without any special metaphysical aptitude, the systems both of Hume and Berkeley appeared to be open to the fatal objection of paradox, and, hence, throughout the eighteenth century, Locke continued, in ordinary estimation, to hold the supreme place among English philosophers. Horace Walpole (writing in 1789) probably expresses the average opinion of the English reading public of his time, when he says that Locke (with whom he couples Bacon) was almost the first philosopher who introduced common-sense into his writings. Nor was it only that he was supreme in popular estimation. His influence is apparent in almost every philosophical and quasi-philosophical work of the period. It may specially be mentioned that the doctrine of Innate Ideas went out of fashion, both word and thing, and, when a similar doctrine came into vogue at the end of the century, under the authority of Reid and Stewart, it was in a modified form and under a new appellation, that of primary or fundamental beliefs. These authors always spoke with the greatest respect of Locke, and Stewart especially was always anxious to establish, when possible, an identity of opinion between himself and his illustrious predecessor. And even in recent times, when the topics and conditions of philosophical speculation have undergone so much change, there are few philosophical authors of eminence who do not make frequent reference to Locke's *Essay*. It is now perhaps seldom read through except by professed students of philosophy, but it is still probably oftener

"dipped into" than any other philosophical treatise in the language.

In France, the *Essay* at first made little way. It took more than twenty years to sell off the first edition of the French translation, but from 1723 to 1758 editions followed one another in rapid succession at intervals of about six years. Voltaire says that no man had been less read or more abused in France than Locke. The points in his philosophy which seem to have been specially selected for attack were the statements that God might, if he pleased, annex thought to matter, and that the natural reason could not alone assure us of the immortality of the soul. The qualifications, as the custom is, were dropped out of these statements, and it was roundly asserted that Locke maintained the soul to be material and mortal. Voltaire does not fail to point out the hastiness and injustice of these conclusions, and is himself unbounded in his admiration for the English philosopher. Malebranche, he says, is read on account of the agreeableness of his style, Descartes on account of the hardihood of his speculations; Locke is not read, because he is merely wise. There never was a thinker more wise, more methodical, more logical than Locke. Other reasoners had written a romance of the soul; Locke came and modestly wrote its history, developing the ideas of the human understanding as an accomplished anatomist explains the forces of the human body. Voltaire lived to see the philosophy of Locke, or rather an extreme phase of it, become almost the established creed of those who cared at all for speculative questions in France. Condillac in his early work, the *Essai sur l'Origine des Connoissances Humaines* (first published in 1746), simply adopts Locke's account of the origin of knowledge, finding it in the two

sources of Sensation and Reflection. But in his later work, the *Traité des Sensations*, which appeared in 1754, he has gone far beyond his master, and not only finds the origin of all knowledge in sensation alone, but of all our faculties as well. It is in this work that the metaphor of the gradually animated statue occurs. Condillac's system soon became the fashionable philosophy of his countrymen, and both friends and foes credited Locke with its parentage. With Joseph de Maistre, who may be regarded as the bitterest exponent of French Ultramontanism, Locke is the intermediate link through whom Helvétius, Cabanis, and the other enemies of the human race in France had derived from Bacon the principles which had been so destructive to their country and mankind. But it was not the followers of Condillac only who professed to base their systems on the principles of Locke. Degerando, writing in 1813, says "all the French philosophers of this age glory in ranging themselves among the disciples of Locke, and admitting his principles." The great names of Turgot, Diderot, D'Alembert, Condorcet, and Destutt de Tracy alike appear in the roll of his professed disciples. And even when the reaction against the authority of Locke began in France, his influence might still be traced in authors like Maine de Biran, Royer Collard, Cousin, and Jouffroy, however emphatically they might repudiate his system as a whole. Lastly, Auguste Comte may be connected with Locke through Hume.

Except by way of reaction and opposition, Locke's influence has been felt much less in Germany than in either England or France. The earliest opponent of his philosophy, who himself held any high rank as a philosopher, was Leibnitz, who, in his *Nouveaux Essais* (written in 1704, but not published till 1765), attacked not only

Locke's specific conclusions but his method of commencing the study of philosophy with an examination of the human mind. Yet he recognizes the *Essay* as "one of the most beautiful and most esteemed works of this time." It may be remarked as curious that he is disposed to rate the *Thoughts on Education* even still higher than the *Essay*. But, when we think of Locke's relation to German philosophy, it is mainly in connexion with the antagonism of Kant. For, though Kant states that he was "awoke from his dogmatic slumber" by reading Hume, it is plain, throughout the *Kritik*, that he has in his mind the system of Locke at least as much as that of his sceptical successor. And yet these two great philosophers, the reformer of English and the reformer of German philosophy, have much in common, specially their mode of approaching the problems of ontology and theology, which have vexed so many generations of thinkers, by first inquiring into the limits, capacities, and procedure of the human mind.

Of the specific influence of Locke's treatises on Government, Religion, Toleration, Education, and Finance, I have already said something in previous chapters. In each one of these subjects, the publication of his views forms a point of departure, and no writer on the history of any one of them could dispense with a lengthened notice of his theories.

But far more important than their specific influence on other writers, or even on the development of the subjects with which they deal, has been the effect of Locke's writings on the history of progress and civilization. In an age of excitement and prejudice, he set men the example of thinking calmly and clearly. When philosophy was almost synonymous with the arid discussion of

scholastic subtleties, he wrote so as to interest statesmen and men of the world. At a time when the chains of dogma were far tighter, and the penalties of attempting to loosen them far more stringent, than it is now easy to conceive, he raised questions which stirred the very depths of human thought. And all this he did in a spirit so candid, so tolerant, so liberal, and so unselfish, that he seemed to be writing not for his own party or his own times but for the future of knowledge and of mankind. To sound every question to the bottom, never to allow our convictions to outstrip our evidence, to throw aside all prejudices and all interests in the pursuit of truth, but to hold the truth, when found, in all charity and with all consideration towards those who have been less fortunate than we—these are the lessons which, faithfully transmitted through two centuries by those who had eyes to see and ears to hear, he has bequeathed to us and our posterity.

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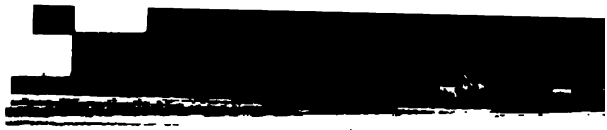
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NOTE.

THE present writer published a study on Burke some twelve years ago. It was almost entirely critical, and in no sense a narrative. The volume now submitted to the readers of this Series is biographical rather than critical, and not more than about a score of pages have been reproduced in it from the earlier book. Three pages (pp. 211—213) have been inserted from an article on Burke contributed by me to the new edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica;* and I have to thank Messrs. Black for the great courtesy with which they have allowed me to transcribe the passage here. These borrowings from my former self, the reader will perhaps be willing to excuse, on the old Greek principle that a man may once say a thing as he would have it said, δὶς δὲ οὐκ ἐνδέχεται—he cannot say it twice.

J. M.



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CHAPTER I.

EARLY LIFE, AND FIRST WRITINGS.

It will soon be a hundred and twenty years since Burke first took his seat in the House of Commons, and it is eighty-five years since his voice ceased to be heard there. Since his death, as during his life, opinion as to the place to which he is entitled among the eminent men of his country has touched every extreme. Tories have extolled him as the saviour of Europe. Whigs have detested him as the destroyer of his party. One undiscriminating panegyrist calls him the most profound and comprehensive of political philosophers that has yet existed in the world. Another and more distinguished writer insists that he is a resplendent and far-seeing rhetorician, rather than a deep and subtle thinker. A third tells us that his works cannot be too much our study, if we mean either to understand or to maintain against its various enemies, open and concealed, designing and mistaken, the singular constitution of this fortunate island. A fourth, on the contrary, declares that it would be hard to find a single leading principle or prevailing sentiment in one half

of these works, to which something extremely adverse cannot be found in the other half. A fifth calls him one of the greatest men, and, Bacon alone excepted, the greatest thinker, who ever devoted himself to the practice of English politics. Yet, oddly enough, the author of the fifth verdict will have it that this great man and great thinker was actually out of his mind, when he composed the pieces for which he has been most widely admired and revered.

A sufficient interval has now passed to allow all the sediment of party fanaticism to fall to the bottom. The circumstances of the world have since Burke's time undergone variation enough to enable us to judge, from many points of view, how far he was the splendid pamphleteer of a faction, and how far he was a contributor to the universal stock of enduring wisdom. Opinion is slowly, but without reaction, settling down to the verdict that Burke is one of the abiding names in our history, not because he either saved Europe or destroyed the Whig party; but because he added to the permanent considerations of wise political thought, and to the maxims of wise practice in great affairs, and because he imprints himself upon us with a magnificence and elevation of expression, that places him among the highest masters of literature, in one of its highest and most commanding senses. Those who have acquired a love for abstract politics amid the almost mathematical closeness and precision of Hobbes, the philosophic calm of Locke or Mill, or even the majestic and solemn fervour of Milton, are revolted by the unrestrained passion and the decorated style of Burke. His passion appears hopelessly fatal to success in the pursuit of Truth, who does not usually reveal herself to followers thus inflamed. His ornate style appears fatal to the

cautious and precise method of statement, suitable to matter which is not known at all unless it is known distinctly. Yet the natural ardour which impelled Burke to clothe his judgments in glowing and exaggerated phrases, is one secret of his power over us, because it kindles in those who are capable of that generous infection a respondent interest and sympathy. But more than this, the reader is speedily conscious of the precedence in Burke of the facts of morality and conduct, of the many interwoven affinities of human affection and historical relation, over the unreal necessities of mere abstract logic. Burke's mind was full of the matter of great truths, copiously enriched from the fountains of generous and many-coloured feeling. He thought about life as a whole, with all its infirmities and all its pomps. With none of the mental exclusiveness of the moralist by profession, he fills every page with solemn reference and meaning ; with none of the mechanical bustle of the common politician, he is everywhere conscious of the mastery of laws, institutions, and government over the character and happiness of men. Besides thus diffusing a strong light over the awful tides of human circumstance, Burke has the sacred gift of inspiring men to use a grave diligence in caring for high things, and in making their lives at once rich and austere. Such a part in literature is indeed high. We feel no emotion of revolt when Mackintosh speaks of Shakespere and Burke in the same breath, as being both of them above mere talent. And we do not dissent when Macaulay, after reading Burke's works over again, exclaims, "How admirable! The greatest man since Milton!"

The precise date of Burke's birth cannot be stated with certainty. All that we can say is that it took place either

in 1728 or 1729, and it is possible that we may set it down in one or the other year, as we choose to reckon by the old or the new style. The best opinion is that he was born at Dublin on the 12th of January, 1729 (N.S.). His father was a solicitor in good practice, and is believed to have been descended from some Bourkes of county Limerick, who held a respectable local position in the time of the civil wars. Burke's mother belonged to the Nagle family, which had a strong connexion in the county of Cork; they had been among the last adherents of James II., and they remained firm Catholics. Mrs. Burke remained true to the church of her ancestors, and her only daughter was brought up in the same faith. Edmund Burke and his two brothers, Garret and Richard, were bred in the religion of their father; but Burke never, in after times, lost a large and generous way of thinking about the more ancient creed of his mother and his uncles.

In 1741 he was sent to school at Ballitore, a village some thirty miles away from Dublin, where Abraham Shackleton, a Quaker from Yorkshire, had established himself fifteen years before, and had earned a wide reputation as a successful teacher and a good man. According to Burke, he richly deserved this high character. It was to Abraham Shackleton that he always professed to owe whatever gain had come to him from education. If I am anything, he said many years afterwards, it is the education I had there that has made me so. His master's skill as a teacher did not impress him more than the example which was every day set before him, of uprightness and simplicity of heart. Thirty years later, when Burke had the news of Shackleton's death (1771), "I had a true honour and affection," he wrote, "for that excellent man. I feel something like a satisfaction in the midst of

my concern, that I was fortunate enough to have him once under my roof before his departure." No man has ever had a deeper or more tender reverence than Burke for homely goodness, simple purity, and all the pieties of life; it may well be that this natural predisposition of all characters at once so genial and so serious as his, was finally stamped in him by his first schoolmaster. It is true that he was only two years at Ballitore, but two years at that plastic time often build up habits in the mind that all the rest of a life is unable to pull down.

In 1743 Burke became a student of Trinity College, Dublin, and he remained there until 1748, when he took his Bachelor's degree. These five years do not appear to have been spent in strenuous industry in the beaten paths of academic routine. Like so many other men of great gifts, Burke in his youth was desultory and excursive. He roamed at large over the varied heights that tempt our curiosity, as the dawn of intelligence first lights them up one after another with bewitching visions and illusive magic. "All my studies," Burke wrote in 1746, when he was in the midst of them, "have rather proceeded from sallies of passion, than from the preference of sound reason; and, like all other natural appetites, have been very violent for a season, and very soon cooled, and quite absorbed in the succeeding. I have often thought it a humorous consideration to observe and sum up all the madness of this kind I have fallen into, this two years past. First, I was greatly taken with natural philosophy; which, while I should have given my mind to logic, employed me incessantly. This I call my *furor mathematicus*. But this worked off as soon as I began to read it in the college, as men by repletion cast off their stomachs all they have

eaten. Then I turned back to logic and metaphysics. Here I remained a good while, and with much pleasure, and this was my *furor logicus*, a disease very common in the days of ignorance, and very uncommon in these enlightened times. Next succeeded the *furor historicus*, which also had its day, but is now no more, being entirely absorbed in the *furor poeticus*."

This is from one of Burke's letters to Richard Shackleton, the son of his schoolmaster, with whom he had formed one of those close friendships that fill the life of generous youth, as ambition fills an energetic manhood. Many tears were shed when the two boys parted at Ballitore, and they kept up their intimacy by a steady correspondence. They discuss the everlasting dispute as to the ultimate fate of those who never heard the saving name of Christ. They send one another copies of verses, and Burke prays for Shackleton's judgment on an invocation of his new poem, to beauteous nymphs who haunt the dusky wood, which hangs recumbent o'er the crystal flood. Burke is warned by Shackleton to endeavour to live according to the rules of the Gospel, and he humbly accepts the good advice, with the deprecatory plea that in a town it is difficult to sit down to think seriously: it is easier, he says, to follow the rules of the Gospel in the country, than at Trinity College, Dublin. In the region of profaner things the two friends canvass the comparative worth of Sallust and of Tully's Epistles. Burke holds for the historian, who has, he thinks, a fine, easy, diversified narrative, mixed with reflection, moral and political, neither very trite nor obvious, nor out of the way and abstract, and this is the true beauty of historical observation.

Some pages of verse describe to Shackleton how his

friend passes the day, but the reader will perhaps be content to learn in humbler prose, that Burke rose with the dawn, and strode forth into the country through fragrant gardens and the pride of May, until want of breakfast drove him back unwillingly to the town, where amid lectures and books his heart incessantly turned to the river and the fir woods of Ballitore. In the evening he again turned his back on the city, taking his way "where Liffey rolls her dead dogs to the sea," along to the wall on the shore, whence he delighted to see the sun sink into the waters, gilding ocean, ships, and city as it vanished. Alas, it was beneath the dignity of verse to tell us what we should most gladly have known. For,

> "The muse nor can, nor will declare,
> What is my work, and what my studies there."

What serious nourishment Burke was laying in for his understanding, we cannot learn from any other source. He describes himself as spending three hours almost every day in the public library, "the best way in the world," he adds oddly enough, "of killing thought." I have read some history, he says, and among other pieces of history, "I am endeavouring to get a little into the accounts of this, our own poor country,"—a pathetic expression, which represents Burke's perpetual mood, as long as he lived, of affectionate pity for his native land. Of the eminent Irishmen whose names adorn the annals of Trinity College in the eighteenth century, Burke was only contemporary at the University with one, the luckless sizar who in the fulness of time wrote the *Vicar of Wakefield*. There is no evidence that at this time he and Goldsmith were acquainted with one another. Flood had gone to Oxford some time before. The one or two

companions whom Burke mentions in his letters, are only shadows of names. The mighty Swift died in 1745, but there is nothing of Burke's upon the event. In the same year came the Pretender's invasion, and Burke spoke of those who had taken part in it in the same generous spirit that he always showed to the partisans of lost historic causes.

Of his own family Burke says little, save that in 1746 his mother had a dangerous illness. In all my life, he writes to his friend, I never found so heavy a grief, nor really did I well know what it was before. Burke's father is said to have been a man of angry and irritable temper, and their disagreements were frequent. This unhappy circumstance made the time for parting not unwelcome. In 1747 Burke's name had been entered at the Middle Temple, and after taking his degree, he prepared to go to England to pursue the ordinary course of a lawyer's studies. He arrived in London in the early part of 1750.

A period of nine years followed, in which the circumstances of Burke's life are enveloped in nearly complete obscurity. He seems to have kept his terms in the regular way at the Temple, and from the mastery of legal principles and methods which he afterwards showed in some important transactions, we might infer that he did more to qualify himself for practice than merely dine in the hall of his Inn. For law, alike as a profession and an instrument of mental discipline, he had always the profound respect that it so amply deserves, though he saw that it was not without drawbacks of its own. The law, he said, in his fine description of George Grenville, in words that all who think about schemes of education ought to ponder, "is, in my opinion, one of the first and noblest of human

sciences; *a science which does more to quicken and invigorate the understanding than all the other kinds of learning put together;* but it is not apt, except in persons very happily born, to open and to liberalize the mind exactly in the same proportion."[1] Burke was never called to the bar, and the circumstance that, about the time when he ought to have been looking for his first guinea, he published a couple of books which had as little as possible to do with either law or equity, is a tolerably sure sign that he had followed the same desultory courses at the Temple as he had followed at Trinity College. We have only to tell over again a very old story. The vague attractions of literature prevailed over the duty of taking up a serious profession. His father, who had set his heart on having a son in the rank of a barrister, was first suspicious, then extremely indignant, and at last he withdrew his son's allowance, or else reduced it so low that the recipient could not possibly live upon it. This catastrophe took place some time in 1755,—a year of note in the history of literature, as the date of the publication of Johnson's Dictionary. It was upon literature, the most seductive, the most deceiving, the most dangerous of professions, that Burke, like so many hundreds of smaller men before and since, now threw himself for a livelihood.

Of the details of the struggle we know very little. Burke was not fond in after life of talking about his earlier days, not because he had any false shame about the straits and hard shifts of youthful neediness, but because he was endowed with a certain inborn stateliness of nature, which made him unwilling to waste thoughts on the less dignified parts of life. This is no unqualified virtue, and Burke might have escaped some

[1] *American Taxation.*

wearisome frets and embarrassments in his existence, if he had been capable of letting the detail of the day lie more heavily upon him. So far as it goes, however, it is a sign of mental health that a man should be able to cast behind him the barren memories of bye-gone squalor. We may be sure that whatever were the external ordeals of his apprenticeship in the slippery craft of the literary adventurer, Burke never failed in keeping for his constant companions generous ambitions and high thoughts. He appears to have frequented the debating clubs in Fleet Street and the Piazza of Covent Garden, and he showed the common taste of his time for the theatre. He was much of a wanderer, partly from the natural desire of restless youth to see the world, and partly because his health was weak. In after life he was a man of great strength, capable not only of bearing the strain of prolonged application to books and papers in the solitude of his library, but of bearing it at the same time with the distracting combination of active business among men. At the date of which we are speaking, he used to seek a milder air at Bristol, or in Monmouthshire, or Wiltshire. He passed the summer in retired country villages, reading and writing with desultory industry, in company with William Burke, a namesake but perhaps no kinsman. It would be interesting to know the plan and scope of his studies. We are practically reduced to conjecture. In a letter of counsel to his son in after years, he gave him a weighty piece of advice, which is pretty plainly the key to the reality and fruitfulness of his own knowledge. "*Reading*," he said, "*and much reading, is good. But the power of diversifying the matter infinitely in your own mind, and of applying it to every occasion that arises, is far better; so don't*

suppress the vivida vis." We have no more of Burke's doings than obscure and tantalizing glimpses, tantalizing, because he was then at the age when character usually either fritters itself away, or grows strong on the inward sustenance of solid and resolute aspirations. Writing from Battersea to his old comrade, Shackleton, in 1757, he begins with an apology for a long silence which seems to have continued from months to years. "I have broken all rules; I have neglected all decorums; everything except that I have never forgot a friend, whose good head and heart have made me esteem and love him. What appearance there may have been of neglect, arises from my manner of life; chequered with various designs; sometimes in London, sometimes in remote parts of the country; sometimes in France, and shortly, please God, to be in America."

One of the hundred inscrutable rumours that hovered about Burke's name was, that he at one time actually did visit America. This was just as untrue as that he became a convert to the Catholic faith; or that he was the lover of Peg Woffington; or that he contested Adam Smith's chair of moral philosophy at Glasgow along with Hume, and that both Burke and Hume were rejected in favour of some fortunate Mr. James Clow. They are all alike unfounded. But the same letter informs Shackleton of a circumstance more real and more important than any of these, though its details are only doubtfully known. Burke had married—when and where, we cannot tell. Probably the marriage took place in the winter of 1756. His wife was the daughter of Dr. Nugent, an Irish physician once settled at Bath. One story is that Burke consulted him in one of his visits to the west of England, and fell in love with his daughter. Another

version makes Burke consult him after Dr. Nugent had removed to London; and tells how the kindly physician, considering that the noise and bustle of chambers over a shop must hinder his patient's recovery, offered him rooms in his own house. However these things may have been, all the evidence shows Burke to have been fortunate in the choice or accident that bestowed upon him his wife. Mrs. Burke, like her father, was, up to the time of her marriage, a Catholic. Good judges belonging to her own sex describe her as gentle, quiet, soft in her manners, and well-bred. She had the qualities which best fitted and disposed her to soothe the vehemence and irritability of her companion. Though she afterwards conformed to the religion of her husband, it was no insignificant coincidence that in two of the dearest relations of his life the atmosphere of Catholicism was thus poured round the great preacher of the crusade against the Revolution.

About the time of his marriage, Burke made his first appearance as an author. It was in 1756 that he published *A Vindication of Natural Society*, and the more important essay, *A Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of our Ideas on the Sublime and Beautiful*. The latter of them had certainly been written a long time before, and there is even a traditional story that Burke wrote it when he was only nineteen years old. Both of these performances have in different degrees a historic meaning, but neither of them would have survived to our own day unless they had been associated with a name of power. A few words will suffice to do justice to them here. And first as to the *Vindication of Natural Society*. Its alternative title was, *A View of the Miseries and Evils arising to Mankind from every Species of Civil Society, in a Letter to Lord ——, by a late Noble Writer*. Bolingbroke had

died in 1751, and in 1754 his philosophical works were posthumously given to the world by David Mallet, Dr. Johnson's beggarly Scotchman, to whom Bolingbroke had left half-a-crown in his will, for firing off a blunderbuss which he was afraid to fire off himself. The world of letters had been keenly excited about Bolingbroke. His busy and chequered career, his friendship with the great wits of the previous generation, his splendid style, his bold opinions, made him a dazzling figure. This was the late Noble Writer whose opinions Burke intended to ridicule, by reducing them to an absurdity in an exaggeration of Bolingbroke's own manner. As it happened, the public did not readily perceive either the exaggeration in the manner, or the satire in the matter. Excellent judges of style made sure that the writing was really Bolingbroke's, and serious critics of philosophy never doubted that the writer, whoever he was, meant all that he said. We can hardly help agreeing with Godwin, when he says that in Burke's treatise the evils of existing political institutions, which had been described by Locke, are set forth more at large, with incomparable force of reasoning and lustre of eloquence, though the declared intention of the writer was to show that such evils ought to be considered merely trivial. Years afterwards, Boswell asked Johnson whether an imprudent publication by a certain friend of his at an early period of his life, would be likely to hurt him? "No, sir," replied the sage; "not much; it might perhaps be mentioned at an election." It is significant that in 1765, when Burke saw his chance of a seat in Parliament, he thought it worth while to print a second edition of his *Vindication*, with a preface to assure his readers that the design of it was ironical. It has been remarked as a very extraordinary circumstance that an author who had the

greatest fame of any man of his day as the master of a superb style, for this was indeed Bolingbroke's position, should have been imitated to such perfection by a mere novice, that accomplished critics like Chesterfield and Warburton should have mistaken the copy for a first-rate original. It is, however, to be remembered that the very boldness and sweeping rapidity of Bolingbroke's prose rendered it more fit for imitation, than if its merits had been those of delicacy or subtlety; and we must remember that the imitator was no pygmy, but himself one of the giants. What is certain is that the study of Bolingbroke which preceded this excellent imitation, left a permanent mark, and traces of Bolingbroke were never effaced from the style of Burke.

The point of the *Vindication* is simple enough. It is to show that the same instruments which Bolingbroke had employed in favour of natural against revealed religion, could be employed with equal success in favour of natural as against, what Burke calls, artificial society. "Show me," cries the writer, "an absurdity in religion, and I will undertake to show you a hundred for one in political laws and institutions. If, after all, you should confess all these things, yet plead the necessity of political institutions, weak and wicked as they are, I can argue with equal, perhaps superior force, concerning the necessity of artificial religion; and every step you advance in your argument, you add a strength to mine. So that if we are resolved to submit our reason and our liberty to civil usurpation, we have nothing to do but to conform as quietly as we can to the vulgar notions which are connected with this, and take up the theology of the vulgar as well as their politics. But if we think this necessity rather imaginary than real, we should renounce their

dreams of society, together with their visions of religion, and vindicate ourselves into perfect liberty."

The most interesting fact about this spirited performance is, that it is a satirical literary handling of the great proposition which Burke enforced, with all the thunder and lurid effulgence of his most passionate rhetoric five-and-thirty years later. This proposition is that the world would fall into ruin, "if the practice of all moral duties, and the foundations of society, rested upon having their reasons made clear and demonstrative to every individual." The satire is intended for an illustration of what with Burke was the cardinal truth for men, namely, that if you encourage every individual to let the imagination loose upon all subjects, without any restraint from a sense of his own weakness, and his subordinate rank in the long scheme of things, then there is nothing of all that the opinion of ages has agreed to regard as excellent and venerable, which would not be exposed to destruction at the hands of rationalistic criticism. This was Burke's most fundamental and unswerving conviction from the first piece that he wrote down to the last, and down to the last hour of his existence.

It is a coincidence worth noticing that only two years before the appearance of the *Vindication*, Rousseau had published the second of the two memorable Discourses in which he insisted with serious eloquence on that which Burke treats as a triumph of irony. He believed, and many thousands of Frenchmen came to a speculative agreement with him, that artificial society had marked a decline in the felicity of man, and there are passages in the Discourse in which he demonstrates this, that are easily interchangeable with passages in the *Vindication*. Who would undertake to tell us from internal evidence whether the following

page, with its sombre glow, is an extract from Burke, or an extract from the book which Rousseau begins by the sentence that man is born free, yet is he everywhere in chains?—

There are in Great Britain upwards of a hundred thousand people employed in lead, tin, iron, copper, and coal mines; these unhappy wretches scarce ever see the light of the sun; they are buried in the bowels of the earth; there they work at a severe and dismal task, without the least prospect of being delivered from it; they subsist upon the coarsest and worst sort of fare; they have their health miserably impaired, and their lives cut short, by being perpetually confined in the close vapour of these malignant minerals. A hundred thousand more at least are tortured without remission by the suffocating smoke, intense fires, and constant drudgery, necessary in refining and managing the products of those mines. If any man informed us that two hundred thousand innocent persons were condemned to so intolerable slavery, how should we pity the unhappy sufferers, and how great would be our just indignation against those who inflicted so cruel and ignominious a punishment! . . . But this number, considerable as it is, and the slavery, with all its baseness and horror, which we have at home, is nothing to what the rest of the world affords of the same nature. Millions daily bathed in the poisonous damps and destructive effluvia of lead, silver, copper, and arsenic, to say nothing of those other employments, those stations of wretchedness and contempt, in which civil society has placed the numerous *enfans perdus* of her army. Would any rational man submit to one of the most tolerable of these drudgeries, for all the artificial enjoyments which policy has made to result from them? Indeed the blindness of one part of mankind co-operating with the frenzy and villany of the other, has been the real builder of this respectable fabric of political society: and as the blindness of mankind has caused their slavery, in return their state of slavery is made a pretence for continuing them in a state of blindness; for the politician will tell you gravely, that their life of servitude disqualifies the greater part of the race of man for a search of truth, and supplies them with no other than mean and insufficient ideas. This is but too true; and this is one of the reasons for which I blame such institutions.

From the very beginning, therefore, Burke was drawn to the deepest of all the currents in the thought of the eighteenth century. Johnson and Goldsmith continued the traditions of social and polite literature which had been established by the Queen Anne men. Warburton and a whole host of apologists carried on the battle against deism and infidelity. Hume, after furnishing the arsenal of scepticism with a new array of deadlier engines and more abundant ammunition, had betaken himself placidly to the composition of history. What is remarkable in Burke's first performance is his discernment of the important fact, that behind the intellectual disturbances in the sphere of philosophy, and the noisier agitations in the sphere of theology, there silently stalked a force that might shake the whole fabric of civil society itself. In France, as all students of its speculative history are agreed, there came a time in the eighteenth century when theological controversy was turned into political controversy. Innovators left the question about the truth of Christianity, and busied themselves with questions about the ends and means of governments. The appearance of Burke's *Vindication of Natural Society* coincides in time with the beginning of this important transformation. Burke foresaw from the first what, if rationalism were allowed to run an unimpeded course, would be the really great business of the second half of his century.

If in his first book Burke showed how alive he was to the profound movement of the time, in the second he dealt with one of the most serious of its more superficial interests. The essay on the Sublime and Beautiful fell in with a set of topics, on which the curiosity of the better minds of the age, alike in France, England, and Germany was fully stirred. In England the essay has been ordinarily slighted;

it has perhaps been overshadowed by its author's fame in weightier matters. The nearest approach to a full and serious treatment of its main positions is to be found in Dugald Stewart's lectures. The great rhetorical art-critic of our own day refers to it in words of disparagement, and in truth it has none of the flummery of modern criticism. It is a piece of hard thinking, and it has the distinction of having interested and stimulated Lessing, the author of *Laokoön* (1766), by far the most definitely valuable of all the contributions to æsthetic thought in an age which was not poor in them. Lessing was so struck with the *Inquiry* that he set about a translation of it, and the correspondence between him and Moses Mendelssohn on the questions which Burke had raised, contains the germs of the doctrine as to poetry and painting which *Laokoön* afterwards made so famous. Its influence on Lessing and on Kant was such as to justify the German historian of the literature of the century, in bestowing on it the coveted epithet of epoch-making.

The book is full of crudities. We feel the worse side of the eighteenth century when Burke tells us that a thirst for Variety in architecture is sure to leave very little true taste; or that an air of robustness and strength is very prejudicial to beauty; or that sad fuscous colours are indispensable for sublimity. Many of the sections, again, are little more than expanded definitions from the dictionary. Any tiro may now be shocked at such a proposition as that beauty acts by relaxing the solids of the whole system. But at least one signal merit remains to the *Inquiry*. It was a vigorous enlargement of the principle, which Addison had not long before timidly illustrated, that critics of art seek its principles in the wrong place, so long as they limit their search to poems, pictures, engravings,

statues, and buildings, instead of first arranging the sentiments and faculties in man to which art makes its appeal. Addison's treatment was slight and merely literary; Burke dealt boldly with his subject on the base of the most scientific psychology that was then within his reach. To approach it on the psychological side at all, was to make a distinct and remarkable advance in the method of the inquiry which he had taken in hand.

CHAPTER II.

IN IRELAND—PARLIAMENT—BEACONSFIELD.

BURKE was thirty years old before he approached even the threshold of the arena in which he was destined to be so great a figure. He had made a mark in literature, and it was to literature rather than to public affairs that his ambition turned. He had naturally become acquainted with the brother authors who haunted the coffee-houses in Fleet Street; and Burke, along with his father-in-law, Dr. Nugent, was one of the first members of the immortal club where Johnson did conversational battle with all comers. We shall, in a later chapter, have something to say on Burke's friendships with the followers of his first profession, and on the active sympathy with which he helped those who were struggling into authorship. Meanwhile, the fragments that remain of his own attempts in this direction are no considerable contributions. His *Hints for an Essay on the Drama* are jejune and infertile, when compared with the vigorous and original thought of Diderot and Lessing at about the same period. He wrote an Account of the European Settlements in America. His *Abridgment of the History of England* comes down no further than to the reign of John. A much more important undertaking than his history of the past, was his design for a yearly chronicle of the present.

The *Annual Register* began to appear in 1759. Dodsley, the bookseller of Pall Mall, provided the sinews of war, and he gave Burke a hundred pounds a year for his survey of the great events which were then passing in the world. The scheme was probably born of the circumstances of the hour, for this was the climax of the Seven Years' War. The clang of arms was heard in every quarter of the globe, and in East and West new lands were being brought under the dominion of Great Britain.

In this exciting crisis of national affairs, Burke began to be acquainted with public men. In 1759 he was introduced, probably by Lord Charlemont, to William Gerard Hamilton, who only survives in our memories by his nickname of Single-speech. As a matter of fact, he made many speeches in Parliament, and some good ones, but none so good as the first, delivered in a debate in 1755, in which Pitt, Fox, Grenville, and Murray all took part, and were all outshone by the new luminary. But the new luminary never shone again with its first brilliance. He sought Burke out on the strength of the success of the *Vindication of Natural Society*, and he seems to have had a taste for good company. Horace Walpole describes a dinner at his house in the summer of 1761. "There were Garrick," he says, "and a young Mr. Burke, who wrote a book in the style of Lord Bolingbroke, that is much admired. He is a sensible man, but has not worn off his authorism yet, and thinks there is nothing so charming as writers, and to be one. He will know better one of these days." The prophecy came true in time, but it was Burke's passion for authorism that eventually led to a rupture with his first patron. Hamilton was a man of ability, but selfish and unreasonable. Dr. Leland after-

wards described him compendiously as a sullen, vain, proud, selfish, canker-hearted, envious reptile.

In 1761 Hamilton went to Ireland as secretary to Lord Halifax, and Burke accompanied him in some indefinite capacity. "The absenteeism of her men of genius," an eminent historian has said, "was a worse wrong to Ireland than the absenteeism of her landlords. If Edmund Burke had remained in the country where Providence had placed him, he might have changed the current of its history."[1] It is at least to be said that Burke was never so absorbed in other affairs, as to forget the peculiar interests of his native land. We have his own word and his career does not belie it, that in the elation with which he was filled on being elected a member of Parliament, what was first and uppermost in his thoughts was the hope of being somewhat useful to the place of his birth and education; and to the last he had in it "a dearness of instinct more than he could justify to reason." In fact the affairs of Ireland had a most important part in Burke's life at one or two critical moments, and this is as convenient a place as we are likely to find for describing in a few words what were the issues. The brief space can hardly be grudged in an account of a great political writer, for Ireland has furnished the chief ordeal, test, and standard of English statesmen.

Ireland in the middle of the eighteenth century was to England just what the American colonies would have been, if they had contained, besides the European settlers, more than twice their number of unenslaved negroes. After the suppression of the great rebellion of Tyrconnel by William of Orange, nearly the whole of the land was confiscated, the peasants were made beggars and outlaws,

[1] Froude's *Ireland*, ii. 214.

the Penal Laws against the Catholics were enacted and enforced, and the grand reign of Protestant Ascendancy began in all its vileness and completeness. The Protestants and landlords were supreme; the peasants and the Catholics were prostrate in despair. The Revolution brought about in Ireland just the reverse of what it effected in England. Here it delivered the body of the nation from the attempted supremacy of a small sect. There it made a small sect supreme over the body of the nation. "It was, to say the truth," Burke wrote, "not a revolution but a conquest," and the policy of conquest was treated as the just and normal system of government. The last conquest of England was in the eleventh century. The last conquest of Ireland was at the very end of the seventeenth.

Sixty years after these events, when Burke revisited Ireland, some important changes had taken place. The English settlers of the beginning of the century had formed an Irish interest. They had become Anglo-Irish, just as the colonists still further west had formed a colonial interest and become Anglo-American. The same conduct on the part of the mother country promoted the growth of these hostile interests in both cases. The commercial policy pursued by England towards America was identical with that pursued towards Ireland. The industry of the Anglo-Irish traders was restricted, their commerce and even their production fettered, their prosperity checked, for the benefit of the merchants of Manchester and Bristol. *Crescit Roma Albæ ruinis.* "The bulk of the people," said Stone, the Primate, "are not regularly either lodged, clothed, or fed; and those things which in England are called necessaries of life, are to us only accidents, and we can, and in many places do, subsist

without them." On the other hand, the peasantry had gradually taken heart to resent their spoliation and attempted extirpation, and in 1761 their misery under the exactions of landlords and a church which tried to spread Christianity by the brotherly agency of the tithe-proctor, gave birth to Whiteboyism—a terrible spectre, which, under various names and with various modifications, has ridden Ireland down to our own time.

Burke saw the Protestant traders of the dependency the victims of the colonial and commercial system; the Catholic landowners legally dispossessed by the operation of the penal laws; the Catholic peasantry deeply penetrated with an insurgent and vindictive spirit; and the imperial government standing very much aloof, and leaving the country to the tender mercies of the Undertakers and some Protestant churchmen. The Anglo-Irish were bitterly discontented with the mother country; and the Catholic native Irish were regarded by their Protestant oppressors with exactly that combination of intense contempt and loathing, and intense rage and terror, which their American counterpart would have divided between the Negro and the Red Indian. To the Anglo-Irish the native peasant was as odious as the first, and as terrible as the second. Even at the close of the century Burke could declare that the various descriptions of the people were kept as much apart, as if they were not only separate nations, but separate species. There were thousands, he says, who had never talked to a Roman Catholic in their whole lives, unless they happened to talk to a gardener's workman or some other labourer of the second or third order, while a little time before this they were so averse to have them near their persons, that they would not employ even those who

could never find their way beyond the stables. Chesterfield, a thoroughly impartial and just observer, said in 1764 that the poor people in Ireland were used worse than negroes by their masters and the middlemen. We should never forget that in the transactions with the English government during the eighteenth century, the people concerned were not the Irish, but the Anglo-Irish, the colonists of 1691. They were an aristocracy, as Adam Smith said of them, not founded in the natural and respectable distinctions of birth and fortune, but in the most odious of all distinctions, those of religious and political prejudices—distinctions which, more than any other, animate both the insolence of the oppressors, and the hatred and indignation of the oppressed.

The directions in which Irish improvement would move, were clear from the middle of the century to men with much less foresight than Burke had. The removal of all commercial restrictions, either by Independence or Union, on the one hand; and the gradual emancipation of the Catholics, on the other; were the two processes to which every consideration of good government manifestly pointed. The first proved a much shorter and simpler process than the second. To the first the only obstacle was the blindness and selfishness of the English merchants. The second had to overcome the virulent opposition of the tyrannical Protestant faction in Ireland, and the disgraceful but deep-rooted antipathies of the English nation. The history of the relation between the mother country and her dependency during Burke's life, may be characterized as a commercial and legislative struggle between the imperial government and the Anglo-Irish interest, in which each side for its own convenience, as the turn served, drew support from the Catholic majority.

A Whiteboy outbreak, attended by the usual circumstances of disorder and violence, took place while Burke was in Ireland. It suited the interests of faction to represent these commotions as the symptoms of a deliberate rebellion. The malcontents were represented as carrying on treasonable correspondence, sometimes with Spain and sometimes with France; they were accused of receiving money and arms from their foreign sympathizers, and of aiming at throwing off the English rule. Burke says that he had means and the desire of informing himself to the bottom upon the matter, and he came strongly to the conclusion that this was not a true view of what had happened. What had happened was due, he thought, to no plot, but to superficial and fortuitous circumstances. He consequently did not shrink from describing it as criminal, that the king's Catholic subjects in Ireland should have been subjected, on no good grounds, to harassing persecution, and that numbers of them should have been ruined in fortune, imprisoned, tried, and capitally executed for a rebellion which was no rebellion at all. The episode is only important as illustrating the strong and manly temper in which Burke, unlike too many of his countrymen with fortunes to make by English favour, uniformly considered the circumstances of his country. It was not until a later time that he had an opportunity of acting conspicuously on her behalf, but whatever influence he came to acquire with his party was unflinchingly used against the cruelty of English prejudice.

Burke appears to have remained in Ireland for two years (1761-3). In 1763 Hamilton, who had found him an invaluable auxiliary, procured for him, principally with the aid of the Primate Stone, a pension of three hundred pounds a year from the Irish Treasury. In thanking

him for this service, Burke proceeded to bargain that the obligation should not bind him to give to his patron the whole of his time. He insisted on being left with a discreet liberty to continue a little work which he had as a rent-charge upon his thoughts. Whatever advantages he had acquired, he says, had been due to literary reputation, and he could only hope for a continuance of such advantages on condition of doing something to keep the same reputation alive. What this literary design was, we do not know with certainty. It is believed to have been a history of England, of which, as I have said, a fragment remains. Whatever the work may have been, it was an offence to Hamilton. With an irrational stubbornness, that may well astound us when we think of the noble genius that he thus wished to confine to paltry personal duties, he persisted that Burke should bind himself to his service for life, and to the exclusion of other interests. "To circumscribe my hopes," cried Burke, "to give up even the possibility of liberty, to annihilate myself for ever!" He threw up the pension, which he had held for two years, and declined all further connexion with Hamilton, whom he roundly described as an infamous scoundrel. "Six of the best years of my life he took me from every pursuit of my literary reputation, or of improvement of my fortune.... In all this time you may easily conceive how much I felt at seeing myself left behind by almost all of my contemporaries. There never was a season more favourable for any man who chose to enter into the career of public life; and I think I am not guilty of ostentation in supposing my own moral character and my industry, my friends and connexions, when Mr. Hamilton first sought my acquaintance, were not at all inferior to those of several whose fortune is at this day upon a very different footing from mine."

It was not long before a more important opening offered itself, which speedily brought Burke into the main stream of public life. In the summer of 1765 a change of ministry took place. It was the third since the king's accession five years ago. First, Pitt had been disgraced, and the old Duke of Newcastle dismissed. Then Bute came into power, but Bute quailed before the storm of calumny and hate which his Scotch nationality, and the supposed source of his power over the king, had raised in every town in England. After Lord Bute, George Grenville undertook the Government. Before he had been many months in office, he had sown the seeds of war in the colonies, wearied parliament, and disgusted the king. In June, 1765, Grenville was dismissed. With profound reluctance the king had no other choice than to summon Lord Rockingham, and Lord Rockingham, in a happy moment for himself and his party, was induced to offer Burke a post as his private secretary. A government by country gentlemen is too apt to be a government of ignorance, and Lord Rockingham was without either experience or knowledge. He felt, or friends felt for him, the advantage of having at his side a man who was chiefly known as an author in the service of Dodsley, and as having conducted the *Annual Register* with great ability, but who even then was widely spoken of as nothing less than an encyclopædia of political knowledge.

It is commonly believed that Burke was commended to Lord Rockingham by William Fitzherbert. Fitzherbert was President of the Board of Trade in the new government, but he is more likely to be remembered as Dr. Johnson's famous example of the truth of the observation, that a man will please more upon the whole by negative qualities than by positive, because he was the most

acceptable man in London, and yet overpowered nobody by the superiority of his talents, made no man think worse of himself by being his rival, seemed always to listen, did not oblige you to hear much from him, and did not oppose what you said. Besides Fitzherbert's influence, we have it on Burke's own authority that his promotion was partly due to that mysterious person, William Burke, who was at the same time appointed an under-secretary of state. There must have been unpleasant rumours afloat as to the Burke connexion, and we shall presently consider what they were worth. Meanwhile, it is enough to say that the old Duke of Newcastle hurried to the new premier, and told him the appointment would never do: that the new secretary was not only an Irish adventurer, which was true, but that he was an Irish papist, which was not true; that he was a Jesuit, that he was a spy from Saint Omer's, and that his real name was O'Bourke. Lord Rockingham behaved like a man of sense and honour, sent for Burke, and repeated to him what he had heard. Burke warmly denounced the truthlessness of the Duke's tattle. He insisted that the reports which his chief had heard would probably, even unknown to himself, create in his mind such suspicions as would stand in the way of a thorough confidence. No earthly consideration, he said, should induce him to continue in relations with a man whose trust in him was not entire; and he pressed his resignation. To this Lord Rockingham would not consent, and from that time until his death, seventeen years afterwards, the relations between them were those of loyal and honourable service on the one hand, and generous and appreciative friendship on the other. Six-and-twenty years afterwards (1791) Burke remembered the month, in which he had

first become connected with a man whose memory, he said, will ever be precious to Englishmen of all parties, as long as the ideas of honour and virtue, public and private, are understood and cherished in this nation.

The Rockingham ministry remained in office for a year and twenty days (1765-6). About the middle of this term (Dec. 26, 1765), Burke was returned to Parliament for the borough of Wendover, by the influence of Lord Verney, who owned it, and who also returned William Burke for another borough. Lord Verney was an Irish peer, with large property in Buckinghamshire; he now represented that county in parliament. It was William Burke's influence with Lord Verney that procured for his namesake the seat at Wendover. Burke made his first speech in the House of Commons a few days after the opening of the session of 1766 (Jan. 27), and was honoured by a compliment from Pitt, still the Great Commoner. A week later he spoke again on the same momentous theme, the complaints of the American colonists, and his success was so marked that good judges predicted, in the stiff phraseology of the time, that he would soon add the palm of the orator to the laurel of the writer and the philosopher. The friendly Dr. Johnson wrote to Langton, that Burke had gained more reputation than any man at his first appearance had ever gained before. The session was a great triumph to the new member, but it brought neither strength nor popularity to the administration. At the end of it, the king dismissed them, and the Chatham government was formed; that strange combination which has been made famous by Burke's description of it, as a piece of joinery so crossly indented and whimsically dove-tailed, such a piece of diversified mosaic, such a tesselated pavement without cement, that it was indeed a

very curious show, but utterly unsafe to touch and unsure to stand upon. There was no obvious reason why Burke should not have joined the new ministry. The change was at first one of persons, rather than of principles or of measures. To put himself, as Burke afterwards said, out of the way of the negotiations which were then being carried on very eagerly and through many channels with the Earl of Chatham, he went to Ireland very soon after the change of ministry. He was free from party engagements, and more than this, he was free at the express desire of his friends; for on the very day of his return, the Marquis of Rockingham wished him to accept office under the new system. Burke "believes he might have had such a situation, but he cheerfully took his fate with his party." In a short time he rendered his party the first of a long series of splendid literary services by writing his *Observations on the Present State of the Nation* (1769). It was a reply to a pamphlet by George Grenville, in which the disappointed minister accused his successors of ruining the country. Burke, in answering the charge, showed a grasp of commercial and fiscal details at least equal to that of Grenville himself, then considered the first man of his time in dealing with the national trade and resources. To this easy mastery of the special facts of the discussion, Burke added the far rarer art of lighting them up by broad principles, and placing himself and his readers at the highest and most effective point of view for commanding their general bearings.

If Burke had been the Irish adventurer that his enemies described, he might well have seized with impatience the opening to office, that the recent exhibition of his powers in the House of Commons had now made accessible to him. There was not a man in Great Britain to whom the

emoluments of office would have been more useful. It is one of the standing mysteries in literary biography, how Burke could think of entering Parliament without any means that anybody can now trace of earning a fitting livelihood. Yet at this time Burke, whom we saw not long ago writing for the booksellers, had become affluent enough to pay a yearly allowance to Barry, the painter, in order to enable him to study the pictures in the great European galleries, and to make a prolonged residence at Rome. A little later he took a step which makes the riddle still more difficult, and which has given abundant employment to wits who are *maximi in minimis*, and think that every question which they can ask, yet to which history has thought it worth while to leave no answer, is somehow a triumph of their own learning and dialectic.

In 1769 Burke purchased a house and lands known as Gregories, in the parishes of Penn and Beaconsfield, in the county of Bucks. It has often been asked, and naturally enough, how a man who, hardly more than a few months before, was still contented to earn an extra hundred pounds a year by writing for Dodsley, should now have launched out as the buyer of a fine house and estate, which cost upwards of twenty-two thousand pounds, which could not be kept up on less than two thousand five hundred a year, and of which the returns did not amount to one-fifth of that sum. Whence did he procure the money, and what is perhaps more difficult to answer, how came he first to entertain the idea of a design so ill-proportioned to anything that we can now discern in his means and prospects? The common answer from Burke's enemies, and even from some neutral inquirers, gives to every lover of this great man's high character an unpleasant shock. It

is alleged that he had plunged into furious gambling in East India stock. The charge was current at the time, and it was speedily revived when Burke's abandonment of his party, after the French Revolution, exposed him to a thousand attacks of reckless and uncontrolled virulence. It has been stirred by one or two pertinacious critics nearer our own time, and none of the biographers have dealt with the perplexities of the matter as they ought to have done. Nobody, indeed, has ever pretended to find one jot or tittle of direct evidence that Burke himself took a part in the gambling in India or other stocks. There is evidence that he was a holder of the stock, and no more. But what is undeniable is that Richard Burke, his brother, William Burke, his intimate if not his kinsman, and Lord Verney, his political patron, were all three at this time engaged together in immense transactions in East India stock; that in 1769 the stock fell violently; that they were unable to pay their differences; and that in the year when Edmund Burke bought Gregories, the other three were utterly ruined, two of them beyond retrieval. Again it is clear that, after this, Richard Burke was engaged in land-jobbing in the West Indies; that his claims were disputed by the Government as questionable and dishonest; and that he lost his case. Edmund Burke was said, in the gossip of the day, to be deeply interested in land at Saint Vincent's. But there is no evidence. What cannot be denied is that an unpleasant taint of speculation and financial adventurership hung at one time about the whole connexion, and that the adventures invariably came to an unlucky end.

Whether Edmund Burke and William Burke were relations or not, and if so, in what degree they were relations, neither of them ever knew; they believed that

their fathers sometimes called one another cousins, and that was all that they had to say on the subject. But they were as intimate as brothers, and when William Burke went to mend his broken fortunes in India, Edmund Burke commended him to Philip Francis,—then fighting his deadly duel of five years with Warren Hastings at Calcutta—as one whom he had tenderly loved, highly valued, and continually lived with in an union not to be expressed, quite since their boyish years. "Looking back to the course of my life," he wrote in 1771, "I remember no one considerable benefit in the whole of it which I did not, mediately or immediately, derive from William Burke." There is nothing intrinsically incredible, therefore, considering this intimacy and the community of purse and home which subsisted among the three Burkes, in the theory that when Edmund Burke bought his property in Buckinghamshire, he looked for help from the speculations of Richard and William. However this may have been, from them no help came. Many years afterwards (1783), Lord Verney filed a bill in Chancery claiming from Edmund Burke a sum of 6000*l.*, which he alleged that he had lent at the instigation of William Burke, to assist in completing the purchase of Beaconsfield. Burke's sworn answer denied all knowledge of the transaction, and the plaintiff did not get the relief for which he had prayed.

In a letter to Shackleton (May 1, 1768,) Burke gave the following account of what he had done:—"I have made a push," he says, "with all I could collect of my own, and the aid of my friends, to cast a little root in this country. I have purchased a house, with an estate of about six hundred acres of land, in Buckinghamshire, twenty-four miles from London. It is a place exceedingly

pleasant; and I propose, God willing, to become a farmer in good earnest. You, who are classical, will not be displeased to know that it was formerly the seat of Waller, the poet, whose house, or part of it, makes at present the farm-house within an hundred yards of me." The details of the actual purchase of Beaconsfield have been made tolerably clear. The price was twenty-two thousand pounds, more or less. Fourteen thousand were left on mortgage, which remained outstanding until the sale of the property by Mrs. Burke in 1812. Garret Burke, the elder brother, had shortly before the purchase made Edmund his residuary legatee, and it is guessed that of this bequest two thousand pounds were in cash. The balance of six thousand was advanced by Lord Rockingham on Burke's bond.

The purchase after all was the smallest part of the matter, and it still remains a puzzle not only how Burke was able to maintain so handsome an establishment, but how he could ever suppose it likely that he would be able to maintain it. He counted, no doubt, on making some sort of income by farming. The Irish estate, which he had inherited from his brother, brought in five hundred a year (Arthur Young's *Ireland*, ii. 193). For a short time he received a salary of seven hundred pounds a year as agent for New York. We may perhaps take for granted that he made as much more out of his acres. He received something from Dodsley for his work on the *Annual Register* down to 1788. But when all these resources have been counted up, we cannot but see the gulf of a great yearly deficit. The unhappy truth is that from the middle of 1769, when we find him applying to Garrick for the loan of a thousand pounds, down to 1794 when the king gave him a pension, Burke was never free

from the harassing strain of debts and want of money. It has been stated with good show of authority, that his obligations to Lord Rockingham amounted to not less than thirty thousand pounds. When that nobleman died (1782), with a generosity which is not the less honourable to him for having been so richly earned by the faithful friend who was the object of it, he left instructions to his executors that all Burke's bonds should be destroyed.

We may indeed wish from the bottom of our hearts that all this had been otherwise. But those who press it as a reproach against Burke's memory, may be justly reminded that when Pitt died, after drawing the pay of a minister for twenty years, he left debts to the amount of forty thousand pounds. Burke, as I have said elsewhere, had none of the vices of profusion, but he had that quality which Aristotle places high among the virtues—the noble mean of Magnificence, standing midway between the two extremes of vulgar ostentation and narrow pettiness. At least, every creditor was paid in good time, and nobody suffered but himself. Those who think these disagreeable matters of supreme importance, and allow such things to stand between them and Burke's greatness, are like the people—slightly to alter a figure from a philosopher of old—who, when they went to Olympia, could only perceive that they were scorched by the sun, and pressed by the crowd, and deprived of comfortable means of bathing, and wetted by the rain, and that life was full of disagreeable and troublesome things, and so they almost forgot the great colossus of ivory and gold, Phidias's statue of Zeus, which they had come to see, and which stood in all its glory and power before their perturbed and foolish vision.

There have been few men in history with whom per-

sonal objects counted for so little as they counted with Burke. He really did what so many public men only feign to do. He forgot that he had any interests of his own to be promoted, apart from the interests of the party with which he acted, and from those of the whole nation, for which he held himself a trustee. What William Burke said of him in 1766, was true throughout his life,—"Ned is full of real business, intent upon doing solid good to his country, as much as if he was to receive twenty per cent. from the Empire." Such men as the shrewd and impudent Rigby atoned for a plebeian origin by the arts of dependence and a judicious servility, and drew more of the public money from the pay office in half-a-dozen quarter-days, than Burke received in all his life. It was not by such arts that Burke rose. When we remember all the untold bitterness of the struggle in which he was engaged, from the time when the old Duke of Newcastle tried to make the Marquis of Rockingham dismiss his new private secretary as an Irish Jesuit in disguise (1765), down to the time when the Duke of Bedford, himself battening "in grants to the house of Russell, so enormous as not only to outrage economy, but even to stagger credibility," assailed the government for giving Burke a moderate pension, we may almost imagine that if Johnson had imitated the famous Tenth Satire a little later, he would have been tempted to apply the poet's cynical criticism of the career heroic, to the greater Cicero of his own day. "I was not," Burke said, in a passage of lofty dignity, "like his Grace of Bedford, swaddled and rocked and dandled into a legislator; *Nitor in adversum* is the motto for a man like me. I possessed not one of the qualities, nor cultivated one of the arts, that recommend men to the favour and pro-

tection of the great. I was not made for a minion or a tool. As little did I follow the trade of winning the hearts, by imposing on the understandings of the people. At every step of my progress in life, for in every step was I traversed and opposed, and at every turnpike I met, I was obliged to show my passport, and again and again to prove my sole title to the honour of being useful to my country, by a proof that I was not wholly unacquainted with its laws and the whole system of its interests both abroad and at home; otherwise no rank, no toleration even for me."

CHAPTER III.

THE CONSTITUTIONAL STRUGGLE.

Foreign observers of our affairs looked upon the state of England between the accession of George III., and the loss of the American colonies (1760—1776), with mixed disgust and satisfaction. Their instinct as absolute rulers was revolted by a spectacle of unbridled faction and raging anarchy; their envy was soothed by the growing weakness of a power which Chatham had so short a time before left at the highest point of grandeur and strength. Frederick the Great spoke with contempt of the insolence of Opposition and the virulence of parties; and vowed that, petty German prince as he was, he would not change places with the King of England. The Emperor Joseph pronounced positively that Great Britain was declining, that Parliament was ruining itself, and that the colonies threatened a catastrophe. Catherine of Russia thought that nothing would restore its ancient vigour to the realm, short of the bracing and heroic remedy of a war. Even at home, such shrewd and experienced onlookers as Horace Walpole suspected that the state of the country was more serious than it had been since the Great Rebellion, and declared it to be approaching by fast strides to some sharp crisis. Men who remembered their Roman history, fancied that they saw every symptom of confusion that preceded

the ruin of the Commonwealth, and began to inquire uneasily what was the temper of the army. Men who remembered the story of the violence and insatiable factiousness of Florence, turned again to Macchiavelli and to Guicciardini, to trace a parallel between the fierce city on the Arno and the fierce city on the Thames. When the King of Sweden, in 1772, carried out a revolution, by abolishing an oligarchic council and assuming the powers of a dictator, with the assent of his people, there were actually serious men in England who thought that the English, after having been guilty of every meanness and corruption, would soon, like the Swedes, own themselves unworthy to be free. The Duke of Richmond, who happened to have a claim to a peerage and an estate in France, excused himself for taking so much pains to establish his claim to them, by gravely asking who knew that a time might not soon come when England would not be worth living in, and when a retreat to France might be a very happy thing for a free man to have?

The reign had begun by a furious outbreak of hatred between the English and the Scotch. Lord Bute had been driven from office, not merely because he was supposed to owe his power to a scandalous friendship with the King's mother, but because he was accused of crowding the public service with his detested countrymen from the other side of the Tweed. He fell, less from disapproval of his policy, than from rude prejudice against his country. The flow of angry emotion had not subsided before the whisper of strife in the American colonies began to trouble the air; and before that had waxed loud, the Middlesex election had blown into a portentous hurricane. This was the first great constitutional case after Burke came into the House of Commons. As, moreover, it became a

leading element in the crisis which was the occasion of Burke's first remarkable essay in the literature of politics, it is as well to go over the facts.

The Parliament to which he had first been returned, now approaching the expiry of its legal term, was dissolved in the spring of 1768. Wilkes, then an outlaw in Paris, returned to England, and announced himself as a candidate for the City. When the election was over, his name stood last on the poll. But his ancient fame as the opponent and victim of the court five years before, was revived. After his rejection in the City, he found himself strong enough to stand for the county of Middlesex. Here he was returned at the head of the poll after an excited election. Wilkes had been tried in 1764, and found guilty by the King's Bench of republishing Number Forty-five of the *North Briton*, and of printing and publishing the *Essay on Woman*. He had not appeared to receive sentence, and had been outlawed in consequence. After his election for Middlesex, he obtained a reversal of his outlawry on a point of technical form. He then came up for sentence under the original verdict. The court sent him to prison for twenty-two months, and condemned him to pay a fine of a thousand pounds.

Wilkes was in prison when the second session of the new Parliament began. His case came before the House in November, 1768, on his own petition, accusing Lord Mansfield of altering the record at his trial. After many acrimonious debates and examinations of Wilkes and others at the bar of the House, at length, by 219 votes against 136, the famous motion was passed which expelled him from the House. Another election for Middlesex was now held, and Wilkes was returned without opposition. The day after the return, the House of Commons

resolved by an immense majority, that having been expelled, Wilkes was incapable of serving in that Parliament. The following month Wilkes was once more elected. The House once more declared the election void. In April another election took place, and this time the Government put forward Colonel Luttrell, who vacated his seat for Bossiney for the purpose of opposing Wilkes. There was the same result, and for the fourth time Wilkes was at the head of the poll. The House ordered the return to be altered, and after hearing by counsel the freeholders of Middlesex who petitioned against the alteration, finally confirmed it (May 8, 1769) by a majority of 221 to 152. According to Lord Temple, this was the greatest majority ever known on the last day of a session.

The purport and significance of these arbitrary proceedings need little interpretation. The House, according to the authorities, had a constitutional right to expel Wilkes, though the grounds on which even this is defended, would probably be questioned if a similar case were to arise in our own day. But a single branch of the legislature could have no power to pass an incapacitating vote either against Wilkes or anybody else. An Act of Parliament is the least instrument by which such incapacity could be imposed. The House might perhaps expel Wilkes, but it could not either legally or with regard to the less definite limits of constitutional morality, decide whom the Middlesex freeholders should not elect, and it could not therefore set aside their representative, who was then free from any disabling quality. Lord Camden did not much exaggerate, when he declared in a debate on the subject in the House of Lords, that the judgment passed upon the Middlesex election had given the constitution a more dangerous wound than any which were given during the twelve

years' absence of Parliament in the reign of Charles I. The House of Commons was usurping another form of that very dispensing power, for pretending to which the last of the Stuart sovereigns had lost his crown. If the House by a vote could deprive Wilkes of a right to sit, what legal or constitutional impediment would there be in the way, if the majority were at any time disposed to declare all their most formidable opponents in the minority incapable of sitting?

In the same Parliament, there was another and scarcely less remarkable case of Privilege, "that eldest son of Prerogative," as Burke truly called it, "and inheriting all the vices of its parent." Certain printers were accused of breach of privilege for reporting the debates of the House (March, 1771). The messenger of the serjeant-at-arms attempted to take one of them into custody in his own shop in the City. A constable was standing by, designedly, it has been supposed, and Miller, the printer, gave the messenger into his custody for an assault. The case came on before the Lord Mayor, Alderman Wilkes, and Alderman Oliver, the same evening, and the result was that the messenger of the House was committed. The City doctrine was, that if the House of Commons had a serjeant-at-arms, they had a serjeant-at-mace. If the House of Commons could send their citizens to Newgate, they could send its messenger to the Compter. Two other printers were collusively arrested, brought before Wilkes and Oliver, and at once liberated.

The Commons instantly resolved on stern measures. The Lord Mayor and Oliver were taken and dispatched to the Tower, where they lay until the prorogation of Parliament. Wilkes stubbornly refused to pay any attention to repeated summonses to attend at the bar of the

House, very properly insisting that he ought to be summoned to attend *in his place* as member for Middlesex. Besides committing Crosby and Oliver to the Tower, the House summoned the Lord Mayor's clerk to attend with his books, and then and there forced him to strike out the record of the recognisances into which their messenger had entered on being committed at the Mansion House. No Stuart ever did anything more arbitrary and illegal. The House deliberately intended to constitute itself, as Burke had said two years before, an arbitrary and despotic assembly. "The distempers of monarchy were the great subjects of apprehension and redress in the last century. In this, the distempers of Parliament."

Burke, in a speech which he delivered in his place in 1771, warned the House of the evils of the course upon which they were entering, and declared those to be their mortal enemies who would persuade them to act as if they were a self-originated magistracy, independent of the people, and unconnected with their opinions and feelings. But these mortal enemies of its very constitution were at this time the majority of the House. It was to no purpose that Burke argued with more than legal closeness that incapacitation could not be a power according to law, inasmuch as it had neither of the two properties of law: it was not *known*, "you yourselves not knowing upon what grounds you will vote the incapacity of any man;" and it was not *fixed*, because it was varied according to the occasion, exercised according to discretion, and no man could call for it as a right. A strain of unanswerable reasoning of this kind counted for nothing, in spite of its being unanswerable. Despotic or oligarchic pretensions are proof against the most formidable battery that reason and experience can construct against them. And Wilkes's

exclusion endured until this Parliament—the Unreported Parliament, as it was called, and in many respects the very worst that ever assembled at Westminster—was dissolved, and a new one elected (1774), when he was once again returned for Middlesex, and took his seat.

The London multitude had grown zealous for Wilkes, and the town had been harassed by disorder. Of the fierce brutality of the crowd of that age, we may form a vivid idea from the unflinching pencil of Hogarth. Barbarous laws were cruelly administered. The common people were turbulent, because misrule made them miserable. Wilkes had written filthy verses, but the crowd cared no more for this than their betters cared about the vices of Lord Sandwich. They made common cause with one who was accidentally a more conspicuous sufferer. Wilkes was quite right when he vowed that he was no Wilkite. The masses were better than their leader. "Whenever the people have a feeling," Burke once said, "they commonly are in the right: they sometimes mistake the physician." Franklin, who was then in London, was of opinion that if George III. had had a bad character, and John Wilkes a good one, the latter might have turned the former out of the kingdom; for the turbulence that began in street riots, at one time threatened to end in revolt. The king himself was attacked with savage invective in papers of which it was said, that no one in the previous century would have dared to print any like them until Charles was fast locked up in Carisbrooke Castle.

As is usual when the minds of those in power have been infected with an arbitrary temper, the employment of military force to crush civil disturbances became a familiar and favourite idea. The military, said Lord Weymouth, in an elaborate letter which he addressed to the

Surrey magistrates, can never be employed to a more constitutional purpose than in the support of the authority and dignity of the magistracy. If the magistrate should be menaced, he is cautioned not to delay a moment in calling for the aid of the military, and making use of them effectually. The consequence of this bloody scroll, as Wilkes rightly called it, was that shortly afterwards an affray occurred between the crowd and the troops, in which some twenty people were killed and wounded (May 10, 1768). On the following day, the Secretary of War, Lord Barrington, wrote to the commanding officer, informing him that the King highly approved of the conduct both of officers and men, and wished that his gracious approbation of them should be communicated to them.

Burke brought the matter before the House in a motion for a Committee of Inquiry, supported by one of the most lucid and able of his minor speeches. "If ever the time should come," he concluded, "when this House shall be found prompt to execute and slow to inquire; ready to punish the excesses of the people, and slow to listen to their grievances; ready to grant supplies, and slow to examine the account; ready to invest magistrates with large powers, and slow to inquire into the exercise of them; ready to entertain notions of the military power as incorporated with the constitution,—when you learn this in the air of St. James's, then the business is done; then the House of Commons will change that character which it receives from the people only." It is hardly necessary to say that his motion for a committee was lost by the overwhelming majority of two hundred and forty-five against thirty. The general result of the proceedings of the government from the accession of George III. to the beginning of the troubles in the American colonies, was in Burke's

own words, that the government was at once dreaded and contemned; that the laws were despoiled of all their respected and salutary terrors; that their inaction was a subject of ridicule, and their exertion of abhorrence; that our dependencies had slackened in their affections; that we knew neither how to yield, nor how to enforce; and that disconnexion and confusion, in offices, in parties, in families, in parliament, in the nation, prevailed beyond the disorders of any former time.

It was in the pamphlet on the *Present Discontents*, published in 1770, that Burke dealt at large with the whole scheme of policy of which all these irregularities were the distempered incidents. The pamphlet was composed as a manifesto of the Rockingham section of the Whig party, to show, as Burke wrote to his chief, how different it was in spirit and composition from "the Bedfords, the Grenvilles, and other knots, who are combined for no public purpose, but only as a means of furthering with joint strength their private and individual advantage." The pamphlet was submitted in manuscript or proof to the heads of the party. Friendly critics excused some inelegancies which they thought they found in occasional passages, by taking for granted, as was true, that he had admitted insertions from other hands. Here for the first time he exhibited, on a conspicuous scale, the strongest qualities of his understanding. Contemporaries had an opportunity of measuring this strength, by comparison with another performance of similar scope. The letters of Junius had startled the world the year before. Burke was universally suspected of being their author, and the suspicion never wholly died out so long as he lived. There was no real ground for it beyond the two unconnected facts, that the letters were powerful letters, and that Burke had a powerful

intellect. Dr. Johnson admitted that he had never had a better reason for believing that Burke was Junius, than that he knew nobody else who had the ability of Junius. But Johnson discharged his mind of the thought, at the instant that Burke voluntarily assured him that he neither wrote the letters of Junius, nor knew who had written them. The subjects and aim of those famous pieces were not very different from Burke's tract, but any one who in our time turns from the letters to the tract, will wonder how the author of the one could ever have been suspected of writing the other. Junius is never more than a railer, and very often he is third-rate even as a railer. The author of the *Present Discontents* speaks without bitterness even of Lord Bute and the Duke of Grafton; he only refers to persons, when their conduct or their situation illustrates a principle. Instead of reviling, he probes, he reflects, he warns; and as the result of this serious method, pursued by a man in whom close mastery of detail kept exact pace with wide grasp of generalities, we have not the ephemeral diatribe of a faction, but one of the monumental pieces of political literature.

The last great pamphlet in the history of English public affairs had been Swift's tract *On the Conduct of the Allies* (1711), in which the writer did a more substantial service for the Tory party of his day, than Burke did for the Whig party of a later date. Swift's pamphlet is close, strenuous, persuasive, and full of telling strokes; but nobody need read it to-day, except the historical student, or a member of the Peace Society, in search of the most convincing exposure of the most insane of English wars.[1] There is not a sentence in it which

[1] This was not Burke's judgment on the long war against Louis XIV. See *Regicide Peace*, i.

does not belong exclusively to the matter in hand: not a line of that general wisdom which is for all time. In the *Present Discontents* the method is just the opposite of this. The details are slurred, and they are not literal. Burke describes with excess of elaboration how the new system is a system of double cabinets; one put forward with nominal powers in Parliament, the other concealed behind the throne, and secretly dictating the policy. The reader feels that this is worked out far too closely to be real. It is a structure of artificial rhetoric. But we lightly pass this over, on our way to more solid matter; to the exposition of the principles of a constitution, the right methods of statesmanship, and the defence of party.

It was Bolingbroke, and not Swift, of whom Burke was thinking, when he sat down to the composition of his tract. The *Patriot King* was the fountain of the new doctrines, which Burke trained his party to understand and to resist. If his foe was domestic, it was from a foreign armoury that Burke derived the instruments of resistance. The great fault of political writers is their too close adherence to the forms of the system of state which they happen to be expounding or examining. They stop short at the anatomy of institutions, and do not penetrate to the secret of their functions. An illustrious author in the middle of the eighteenth century introduced his contemporaries to a better way. It is not too much to say that at that epoch the strength of political speculation in this country, from Adam Smith downwards, was drawn from France; and Burke had been led to some of what was most characteristic in his philosophy of society by Montesquieu's *Spirit of Laws* (1748), the first great manual of the historic school. We have no space here to work out the relations between Montesquieu's principles

and Burke's, but the student of the *Esprit des Lois* will recognize its influence in every one of Burke's masterpieces.

So far as immediate events were concerned, Burke was quick to discern their true interpretation. As has been already said, he attributed to the King and his party a deliberateness of system which probably had no real existence in their minds. The King intended to reassert the old right of choosing his own ministers. George II. had made strenuous but futile endeavours to the same end. His son, the father of George III., Frederick, Prince of Wales, as every reader of Dodington's Diary will remember, was equally bent on throwing off the yoke of the great Whig combinations, and making his own cabinets. George III. was only continuing the purpose of his father and his grandfather; and there is no reason to believe that he went more elaborately to work to obtain his ends.

It is when he leaves the artifices of a cabal, and strikes down below the surface to the working of deep social forces, that we feel the breadth and power of Burke's method. "I am not one of those," he began, "who think that the people are never wrong. They have been so, frequently and outrageously, both in other countries and in this. But I do say that *in all disputes between them and their rulers, the presumption is at least upon a par in favour of the people.*" Nay, experience perhaps justifies him in going further. When popular discontents are prevalent, something has generally been found amiss in the constitution or the administration. "The people have no interest in disorder. When they go wrong, it is their error, and not their crime." And then he quotes the famous passage from the Memoirs of Sully, which both

practical politicians and political students should bind about their necks, and write upon the tables of their hearts:—"The revolutions that come to pass in great states are not the result of chance, nor of popular caprice. As for the populace, it is never from a passion for attack that it rebels, but from impatience of suffering."

What really gives its distinction to the *Present Discontents* is not its plea for indulgence to popular impatience, nor its plea for the superiority of government by aristocracy, but rather the presence in it of the thought of Montesquieu and his school, of the necessity of studying political phenomena in relation, not merely to forms of government and law, but in relation to whole groups of social facts which give to law and government the spirit that makes them workable. Connected with this, is a particularly wide interpretation and a particularly impressive application of the maxims of expediency, because a wide conception of the various interacting elements of a society naturally extends the considerations which a balance of expediencies will include. Hence, in time, there came a strong and lofty ideal of the true statesman, his breadth of vision, his flexibility of temper, his hardly measurable influence. These are the principal thoughts in the *Discontents* to which that tract owes its permanent interest. "Whatever original energy," says Burke, in one place, "may be supposed either in force or regulation, the operation of both is in truth merely instrumental. Nations are governed by the same methods, and on the same principles, by which an individual without authority is often able to govern those who are his equals or superiors; by a knowledge of their temper, and by a judicious management of it. The laws reach but a very little way. Constitute Government how you please, infinitely the greater

part of it must depend upon the exercise of powers, which are left at large to the prudence and uprightness of ministers of state. Even all the use and potency of the laws depends upon them. Without them, your Commonwealth is no better than *a scheme upon paper; and not a living, active, effective constitution.*" Thus early in his public career had Burke seized that great antithesis which he so eloquently laboured in the long and ever memorable episode of his war against the French Revolution: the opposition between artificial arrangements in politics, and a living, active, effective organization, formed by what he calls elsewhere in the present tract, the natural strength of the kingdom, and suitable to the temper and mental habits of the people. When he spoke of the natural strength of the kingdom, he gave no narrow or conventional account of it. He included in the elements of that strength, besides the great peers and the leading landed gentlemen, the opulent merchants and manufacturers, and the substantial yeomanry. Contrasted with the trite versions of government as fixed in King, Lords, and Commons, this search for the real organs of power was going to the root of the matter in a spirit at once thoroughly scientific and thoroughly practical. Burke had, by the speculative training to which he had submitted himself in dealing with Bolingbroke, prepared his mind for a complete grasp of the idea of the body politic as a complex growth, a manifold whole, with closely interdependent relations among its several parts and divisions. It was this conception from which his conservatism sprang. Revolutionary politics have one of their sources in the idea that societies are capable of infinite and immediate modifications, without reference to the deep-rooted conditions that have worked themselves into every part of the social structure.

The same opposition of the positive to the doctrinaire spirit is to be observed in the remarkable vindication of Party, which fills the last dozen pages of the pamphlet, and which is one of the most courageous of all Burke's deliverances. Party combination is exactly one of those contrivances which, as it might seem, a wise man would accept for working purposes, but about which he would take care to say as little as possible. There appears to be something revolting to the intellectual integrity and self-respect of the individual, in the systematic surrender of his personal action, interest, and power, to a political connexion in which his own judgment may never once be allowed to count for anything. It is like the surrender of the right of private judgment to the authority of the Church, but with its nakedness not concealed by a mystic doctrine. Nothing is more easy to demolish by the bare logical reason. But Burke cared nothing about the bare logical reason, until it had been clothed in convenience and custom, in the affections on one side, and experience on the other. Not content with insisting that for some special purpose of the hour, "when bad men combine, the good must associate," he contended boldly for the merits of fidelity to party combination in itself. Although Burke wrote these strong pages as a reply to Bolingbroke, who had denounced party as an evil, they remain as the best general apology that has ever been offered for that principle of public action, against more philosophic attacks than Bolingbroke's. Burke admitted that when he saw a man acting a desultory and disconnected part in public life with detriment to his fortune, he was ready to believe such a man to be in earnest, though not ready to believe him to be right. In any case he lamented to see rare and valuable qualities squandered away without any public

utility. He admitted, moreover, on the other hand, that people frequently acquired in party confederacies a narrow, bigoted, and proscriptive spirit. "But where duty renders a critical situation a necessary one, it is our business to keep free from the evils attendant upon it, and not to fly from the situation itself. It is surely no very rational account of a man that he has always acted right; but has taken special care to act in such a manner that his endeavours could not possibly be productive of any consequence. When men are not acquainted with each other's principles, nor experienced in each other's talents, nor at all practised in their mutual habitudes and dispositions by joint efforts of business; no personal confidence, no friendship, no common interest subsisting among them; it is evidently impossible that they can act a public part with uniformity, perseverance, or efficacy."

In terms of eloquent eulogy he praised the sacred reverence with which the Romans used to regard the *necessitudo sortis*, or the relations that grew up between men who had only held office together by the casual fortune of the lot. He pointed out to emulation the Whig junto who held so close together in the reign of Anne—Sunderland, Godolphin, Somers, and Marlborough—who believed "that no men could act with effect who did not act in concert; that no men could act in concert, who did not act with confidence; and that no men could act with confidence, who were not bound together by common opinions, common affections, and common interests." In reading these energetic passages, we have to remember two things: first, that the writer assumes the direct object of party combination to be generous, great, and liberal causes; and second, that when the time came, and when he believed that his friends were espousing a wrong and

pernicious cause, Burke, like Samson bursting asunder the seven green withes, broke away from the friendships of a life, and deliberately broke his party in pieces.[1]

When Burke came to discuss the cure for the disorders of 1770, he insisted on contenting himself with what he ought to have known to be obviously inadequate prescriptions. And we cannot help feeling that he never speaks of the constitution of the government of this country, without gliding into a fallacy identical with that which he himself described and denounced, as thinking better of the wisdom and power of human legislation than in truth it deserved. He was uniformly consistent in his view of the remedies which the various sections of Opposition proposed against the existing debasement and servility of the Lower House. The Duke of Richmond wanted universal suffrage, equal electoral districts, and annual parliaments. Wilkes proposed to disfranchise the rotten boroughs, to increase the county constituencies, and to give members to rich, populous, trading towns,—a general policy which was accepted fifty-six years afterwards. The Constitutional Society desired frequent parliaments, the exclusion of placemen from the House, and the increase of the county representation. Burke uniformly refused to give his countenance to any proposals such as these, which involved a clearly organic change in the constitution. He confessed that he had no sort of reliance upon either a triennial parliament or a place-bill, and with that reasonableness which as a rule was fully as remarkable in him as his eloquence, he showed very good grounds for his want of faith in the popular specifics. In truth, triennial or annual parliaments could have done no good, unless the change had been accompanied by the more important

[1] See on the same subject, *Corresp.* ii. 276-7.

process of amputating, as Chatham called it, the rotten boroughs. Of these the Crown could at that time reckon some seventy as its own property. Besides those which belonged to the Crown, there was also the immense number which belonged to the Peerage. If the king sought to strengthen an administration, the thing needful was not to enlist the services of able and distinguished men, but to conciliate a duke, who brought with him the control of a given quantity of voting power in the Lower House. All this patrician influence, which may be found at the bottom of most of the intrigues of the period, would not have been touched by curtailing the duration of parliaments.

What then was the remedy, or had Burke no remedy to offer for these grave distempers of Parliament? Only the remedy of the interposition of the body of the people itself. We must beware of interpreting this phrase in the modern democratic sense. In 1766 he had deliberately declared that he thought it would be more conformable to the spirit of the constitution, "by lessening the number, to add to the weight and independency of our voters." "Considering the immense and dangerous charge of elections, the prostitute and daring venality, the corruption of manners, the idleness and profligacy of the lower sort of voters, no prudent man would propose to increase such an evil."[2] In another place he denies that the people have either enough of speculation in the closet, or of experience in business, to be competent judges, not of the detail of particular measures only, but of *general schemes of policy*.[3] On Burke's theory, the people, as a rule, were no more concerned to interfere with Parliament, than a

[2] *Observations on State of the Nation*, Works, i. 105, b.

[3] *Speech on Duration of Parliaments.*

man is concerned to interfere with somebody whom he has voluntarily and deliberately made his trustee. But here, he confessed, was a shameful and ruinous breach of trust. The ordinary rule of government was being every day mischievously contemned and daringly set aside. Until the confidence thus outraged should be once more restored, then the people ought to be excited to a more strict and detailed attention to the conduct of their representatives. The meetings of counties and corporations ought to settle standards for judging more systematically of the behaviour of those whom they had sent to Parliament. Frequent and correct lists of the voters in all important questions ought to be procured. The severest discouragement ought to be given to the pernicious practice of affording a blind and undistinguishing support to every administration. "Parliamentary support comes and goes with office, totally regardless of the man or the measure." For instance, Wilkes's annual motion to expunge the votes upon the Middlesex election had been uniformly rejected, as often as it was made while Lord North was in power. Lord North had no sooner given way to the Rockingham Cabinet, than the House of Commons changed its mind, and the resolutions were expunged by a handsome majority of 115 to 47. Administration was omnipotent in the House, because it could be a man's most efficient friend at an election, and could most amply reward his fidelity afterwards. Against this system Burke called on the nation to set a stern face. Root it up, he kept crying; settle the general course in which you desire members to go; insist that they shall not suffer themselves to be diverted from this by the authority of the government of the day; let lists of votes be published, so that you may ascertain for

yourselves whether your trustees have been faithful or fraudulent; do all this, and there will be no need to resort to those organic changes, those empirical innovations, which may possibly cure, but are much more likely to destroy.

It is not surprising that so halting a policy should have given deep displeasure to very many, perhaps to most, of those whose only common bond was the loose and negative sentiment of antipathy to the court, the ministry, and the too servile majority of the House of Commons. The Constitutional Society was furious. Lord Chatham wrote to Lord Rockingham that the work in which these doctrines first appeared, must do much mischief to the common cause. But Burke's view of the constitution was a part of his belief with which he never paltered, and on which he surrendered his judgment to no man. "Our constitution," in his opinion, "stands on a nice equipoise, with steep precipices and deep waters upon all sides of it. In removing it from a dangerous leaning towards one side, there may be a risk of oversetting it on the other."[4] This image was ever before his mind. It occurs again in the last sentence of that great protest against all change and movement, when he describes himself as one who, when the equipoise of the vessel in which he sails may be endangered by overloading it upon one side, is desirous of carrying the small weight of his reasons to that which may preserve its equipoise.[5] When we think of the odious misgovernment in England which the constitution permitted, between the time when Burke wrote and the passing of Lord Sidmouth's Six Acts fifty years later, we may be inclined to class such a constitution among the

[4] *Present Discontents.*

[5] *Reflections on the French Revolution.*

most inadequate and mischievous political arrangements that any free country has ever had to endure. Yet it was this which Burke declared that he looked upon with filial reverence. "Never will I cut it in pieces, and put it into the kettle of any magician, in order to boil it with the puddle of their compounds into youth and vigour; on the contrary, I will drive away such pretenders; I will nurse its venerable age, and with lenient arts extend a parent's breath."

He was filled with the spirit, and he borrowed the arguments, which have always marked the champion of faith and authority against the impious assault of reason or innovation. The constitution was sacred to him as the voice of the Church and the oracles of her saints are sacred to the faithful. Study it, he cried, until you know how to admire it, and if you cannot know and admire, rather believe that you are dull, than that the rest of the world has been imposed upon. We ought to understand it according to our measure, and to venerate where we are not able presently to comprehend. Well has Burke been called the Bossuet of politics.

Although, however, Burke's unflinching reverence for the constitution, and his reluctance to lay a finger upon it, may now seem clearly excessive, as it did to Chatham and his son, who were great men in the right, or to Beckford and Sawbridge, who were very little men in the right, we can only be just to him by comparing his ideas with those which were dominant throughout an evil reign. While he opposed more frequent parliaments, he still upheld the doctrine that "to govern according to the sense, and agreeably to the interests, of the people is a great and glorious object of government." While he declared himself against the addition of a hundred knights

of the shire, he in the very same breath protested that, though the people might be deceived in their choice of an object, he "could scarcely conceive any choice they could make, to be so very mischievous as the existence of any human force capable of resisting it."[6] To us this may seem very mild and commonplace doctrine, but it was not commonplace in an age when Anglican divines—men like Archbishop Markham, Dr. Nowell or Dr. Porteus—had revived the base precepts of passive obedience and non-resistance, and when such a man as Lord Mansfield encouraged them. And these were the kind of foundations which Burke had been laying, while Fox was yet a Tory, while Sheridan was writing farces, and while Grey was a schoolboy.

It is, however, almost demonstrably certain that the vindication of the supremacy of popular interests over all other considerations would have been bootless toil, and that the great constitutional struggle from 1760 to 1783 would have ended otherwise than it did, but for the failure of the war against the insurgent colonies, and the final establishment of American Independence. It was this portentous transaction which finally routed the arbitrary and despotic pretensions of the House of Commons over the people, and which put an end to the hopes entertained by the sovereign of making his personal will supreme in the Chambers. Fox might well talk of an early Loyalist victory in the war, as the terrible news from Long Island. The struggle which began unsuccessfully at Brentford in Middlesex, was continued at Boston in Massachusetts. The scene had changed, but the conflicting principles were the same. The war of Independence was virtually a second English civil war.

[6] *To the Chairman of the Buckinghamshire Meeting*, 1780.

The ruin of the American cause would have been also the ruin of the constitutional cause in England; and a patriotic Englishman may revere the memory of Patrick Henry and George Washington not less justly than the patriotic American. Burke's attitude in this great contest is that part of his history about the majestic and noble wisdom of which there can be least dispute.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ROCKINGHAM PARTY—PARIS—ELECTION AT BRISTOL—THE AMERICAN WAR.

THE war with the American colonies was preceded by an interval of stupor. The violent ferment which had been stirred in the nation by the affairs of Wilkes and the Middlesex election, was followed, as Burke said, by as remarkable a deadness and vapidity. In 1770 the distracted ministry of the Duke of Grafton came to an end, and was succeeded by that of Lord North. The King had at last triumphed. He had secured an administration of which the fundamental principle was that the sovereign was to be the virtual head of it, and the real director of its counsels. Lord North's government lasted for twelve years, and its career is for ever associated with one of the most momentous chapters in the history of the English nation and of free institutions.

Through this long and eventful period, Burke's was as the voice of one crying in the wilderness. He had become important enough for the ministry to think it worth while to take pains to discredit him. They busily encouraged the report that he was Junius, or a close ally of Junius. This was one of the minor vexations of Burke's middle life. Even his friends continued to torment him for incessant disclaimers. Burke's lofty pride made him slow

to deal positively with what he scorned as a malicious and unworthy imputation. To such a friend as Johnson he did not, as we have seen, disdain to volunteer a denial, but Charles Townshend was forced to write more than one importunate letter before he could extract from Burke the definite sentence (Nov. 24, 1771):—"I now give you my word and honour that I am not the author of Junius, and that I know not the author of that paper, and I do authorize you to say so." Nor was this the only kind of annoyance to which he was subjected. His rising fame kindled the candour of the friends of his youth. With proverbial good nature, they admonished him that he did not bear instruction; that he showed such arrogance as in a man of his condition was intolerable; that he snapped furiously at his parliamentary foes, like a wolf who had broken into the fold; that his speeches were useless declamations; and that he disgraced the House by the scurrilities of the bear-garden. These sharp chastenings of friendship Burke endured with the perfect self-command, not of the cold and indifferent egotist, but of one who had trained himself not to expect too much from men. He possessed the true solace for all private chagrins in the activity and the fervour of his public interests.

In 1772 the affairs of the East India Company, and its relations with the Government, had fallen into disorder. The Opposition, though powerless in the Houses of Parliament, were often able to thwart the views of the ministry in the imperial board-room in Leadenhall Street. The Duke of Richmond was as zealous and as active in his opposition to Lord North in the business of the East Indies, as he was in the business of the country at Westminster. A proposal was made to Burke to go out to India at the

head of a commission of three supervisors, with authority to examine the concerns of every department, and full powers of control over the company's servants. Though this offer was pressed by the directors, Burke after anxious consideration, declined it. What his reasons were, there is no evidence; we can only guess that he thought less of his personal interests, than of those of the country and of his party. Without him the Rockingham connexion would undoubtedly have fallen to ruin, and with it the most upright, consistent, and disinterested body of men then in public life. "You say," the Duke of Richmond wrote to him (Nov. 15, 1772), "the party is an object of too much importance to go to pieces. Indeed, Burke, you have more merit than any man in keeping us together." It was the character of the party, almost as much as their principles, that secured Burke's zeal and attachment; their decorum, their constancy, their aversion to all cabals for private objects, their indifference to office, except as an instrument of power and a means of carrying out the policy of their convictions. They might easily have had office, if they would have come in upon the King's terms. A year after his fall from power, Lord Rockingham was summoned to the royal closet, and pressed to resume his post. But office at any price was not in their thoughts. They knew the penalties of their system, and they clung to it undeterred. Their patriotism was deliberate and considered. Chalcedon was called the city of the blind, because its founders wilfully neglected the more glorious site of Byzantium which lay under their eyes. "We have built our Chalcedon," said Burke, "with the chosen part of the universe full in our prospect." They had the faults to which an aristocratic party in opposition is naturally liable. Burke used to reproach them with being

somewhat languid, scrupulous, and unsystematic. He could not make the Duke of Richmond put off a large party at Goodwood for the sake of an important division in the House of Lords; and he did not always agree with Lord John Cavendish as to what constitutes a decent and reasonable quantity of fox-hunting for a political leader in a crisis. But it was part of the steadfastness of his whole life to do his best with such materials as he could find; he did not lose patience nor abate his effort, because his friends would miss the opportunity of a great political stroke rather than they would miss Newmarket Races. He wrote their protests for the House of Lords, composed petitions for county meetings, drafted resolutions, and plied them with information, ideas, admonitions, and exhortations. Never before nor since has our country seen so extraordinary a union of the clever and indefatigable party-manager, with the reflective and philosophic habits of the speculative publicist. It is much easier to make either absolutism or democracy attractive than aristocracy; yet we see how consistent with his deep moral conservatism was Burke's attachment to an aristocratic party, when we read his exhortation to the Duke of Richmond to remember that persons in his high station in life ought to have long views. "You people," he writes to the Duke (November 17, 1772), "of great families and hereditary trusts and fortunes, are not like such as I am, who, whatever we may be by the rapidity of our growth and even by the fruit we bear, and flatter ourselves that, while we creep on the ground, we belly into melons that are exquisite for size and flavour, yet still we are but annual plants that perish with our season, and leave no sort of traces behind us. You, if you are what you ought to be, are in my eye the great oaks that

shade a country, and perpetuate your benefits from generation to generation. The immediate power of a Duke of Richmond, or a Marquis of Rockingham, is not so much of moment; but if their conduct and example hand down their principles to their successors, then their houses become the public repositories and office of record for the constitution. I do not look upon your time or lives as lost, if in this sliding away from the genuine spirit of the country, certain parties, if possible—if not, the heads of certain families—should make it their business by the whole course of their lives, principally by their example, to mould into the very vital stamina of their descendants those principles which ought to be transmitted pure and unmixed to posterity."

Perhaps such a passage as this ought to be described less as reflection than as imagination—moral, historic, conservative imagination—in which order, social continuity, and the endless projection of past into present, and of present into future, are clothed with the sanctity of an inner shrine. We may think that a fox-hunting duke and a racing marquis were very poor centres round which to group these high emotions. But Burke had no puny sentimentalism, and none of the mere literary or romantic conservatism of men like Chateaubriand. He lived in the real world, and not in a false dream of some past world that had never been. He saw that the sporting squires of his party were as much the representatives of ancestral force and quality, as in older days were long lines of Claudii and Valerii. His conservative doctrine was a profound instinct, in part political, but in greater part moral. The accidental roughness of the symbol did not touch him, for the symbol was glorified by the sincerity of his faith and the compass of his imagination.

With these ideas strong within him, in 1773 Burke made a journey to France. It was almost as though the solemn hierophant of some mystic Egyptian temple should have found himself amid the brilliant chatter of a band of reckless, keen-tongued disputants of the garden or the porch at Athens. His only son had just finished a successful school-course at Westminster, and was now entered a student at Christ Church. He was still too young for the university, and Burke thought that a year could not be more profitably spent than in forming his tongue to foreign languages. The boy was placed at Auxerre, in the house of the business agent of the Bishop of Auxerre. From the Bishop he received many kindnesses, to be amply repaid in after years when the Bishop came in his old age, an exile and a beggar, to England.

While in Paris, Burke did all that he could to instruct himself as to what was going on in French society. If he had not the dazzling reception which had greeted Hume in 1764, at least he had ample opportunities of acquainting himself with the prevailing ideas of the time in more than one of the social camps into which Paris was then divided. Madame du Deffand tells the Duchess of Choiseul that though he speaks French extremely ill, everybody felt that he would be infinitely agreeable if he could more easily make himself understood. He followed French well enough as a listener, and went every day to the courts to hear the barristers and watch the procedure. Madame du Deffand showed him all possible attention, and her friends eagerly seconded her. She invited him to supper parties where he met the Count de Broglie, the agent of the king's secret diplomacy; Caraccioli, successor of nimble-witted Galiani, the secretary from Naples; and other notabilities of the high world. He supped with the

Duchess of Luxembourg, and heard a reading of La Harpe's *Barmecides*. It was high treason in this circle to frequent the rival salon of Mademoiselle Lespinasse, but either the law was relaxed in the case of foreigners, or else Burke kept his own counsel. Here were for the moment the headquarters of the party of innovation, and here he saw some of the men who were busily forging the thunderbolts. His eye was on the alert, now as always, for anything that might light up the sovereign problems of human government. A book by a member of this circle had appeared six months before, which was still the talk of the town, and against which the government had taken the usual impotent measures of repression. This was the *Treatise on Tactics*, by a certain M. de Guibert, a colonel of the Corsican legion. The important part of the work was the introduction, in which the writer examined with what was then thought extraordinary hardihood, the social and political causes of the decline of the military art, in France. Burke read it with keen interest and energetic approval. He was present at the reading of a tragedy by the same author, and gave some offence to the rival coterie by preferring Guibert's tragedy to La Harpe's. To us, however, of a later day, Guibert is known neither for his tragedy nor his essay on tactics, nor for a memory so rapid that he could open a book, throw one glance like a flash of lightning on to a page, and then instantly repeat from it half a dozen lines word for word. He lives in literature as the inspirer of that ardent passion of Mademoiselle Lespinasse's letters, so unique in their consuming intensity that, as has been said, they seem to burn the page on which they are written. It was perhaps at Mdlle. Lespinasse's that Burke met Diderot. The eleven volumes of the illustrative plates of the Encyclopædia had

been given to the public twelve months before, and its editor was just released from the giant's toil of twenty years. Voltaire was in imperial exile at Ferney. Rousseau was copying music in a garret in the street which is now called after his name, but he had long ago cut himself off from society; and Burke was not likely to take much trouble to find out a man whom he had known in England seven years before, and against whom he had conceived a strong and lasting antipathy, as entertaining no principle either to influence his heart or to guide his understanding save a deranged and eccentric vanity.

It was the fashion for English visitors to go to Versailles. They saw the dauphin and his brothers dine in public, before a crowd of princes of the blood, nobles, abbés, and all the miscellaneous throng of a court. They attended mass in the chapel, where the old King, surrounded by bishops, sat in a pew just above that of Madame du Barri. The royal mistress astonished foreigners by hair without powder and cheeks without rouge, the simplest toilettes, and the most unassuming manners. Vice itself, in Burke's famous words, seemed to lose half its evil by losing all its grossness. And there, too, Burke had that vision to which we owe one of the most gorgeous pages in our literature—Marie Antoinette, the young dauphiness, "decorating and cheering the elevated sphere she just began to move in, glittering like the morning star, full of life and splendour and joy." The shadow was rapidly stealing on. The year after Burke's visit, the scene underwent a strange transformation. The King died; the mistress was banished in luxurious exile; and the dauphiness became the ill-starred Queen of France. Burke never forgot the emotions of the scene; they awoke in his imagination sixteen years after, when all was changed, and

the awful contrast shook him with a passion that his eloquence has made immortal.

Madame du Deffand wrote to Horace Walpole that Burke had been so well received, that he ought to leave France excellently pleased with the country. But it was not so. His spirit was perturbed by what he had listened to. He came away with small esteem for that busy fermentation of intellect in which his French friends most exulted, and for which they looked forward to the gratitude and admiration of posterity. From the spot on which he stood there issued two mighty streams. It was from the ideas of the Parisian Freethinkers whom Burke so detested, that Jefferson, Franklin, and Henry drew those theories of human society which were so soon to find life in American Independence. It was from the same ideas that later on that revolutionary tide surged forth, in which Burke saw no elements of a blessed fertility, but only a horrid torrent of red and desolating lava. In 1773 there was a moment of strange repose in Western Europe, the little break of stillness that precedes the hurricane. It was indeed the eve of a momentous epoch. Before sixteen years were over, the American Republic had risen like a new constellation into the firmament, and the French monarchy, of such antiquity and fame and high pre-eminence in European history, had been shattered to the dust. We may not agree with Burke's appreciation of the forces that were behind these vast convulsions. But at least he saw, and saw with eyes of passionate alarm, that strong speculative forces were at work, which must violently prove the very bases of the great social superstructure, and might not improbably break them up for ever.

Almost immediately after his return from France, he sounded a shrill note of warning. Some Methodists from

Chatham had petitioned Parliament against a bill for the relief of Dissenters from subscription to the Articles. Burke denounced the intolerance of the petitioners. It is not the Dissenters, he cried, whom you have to fear, but the men who, "not contented with endeavouring to turn your eyes from the blaze and effulgence of light, by which life and immortality is so gloriously demonstrated by the Gospel, would even extinguish that faint glimmering of Nature, that only comfort supplied to ignorant man before this great illumination. These are the people against whom you ought to aim the shaft of the law; these are the men to whom, arrayed in all the terrors of government, I would say, 'You shall not degrade us into brutes.' The most horrid and cruel blow that can be offered to civil society is through atheism. The infidels are outlaws of the constitution, not of this country, but of the human race. They are never, never to be supported, never to be tolerated. Under the systematic attacks of these people, I see some of the props of good government already begin to fail; I see propagated principles which will not leave to religion even a toleration. I see myself sinking every day under the attacks of these wretched people."[1] To this pitch he had been excited by the vehement band of men, who had inscribed on their standard, *Écraser l'Infâme.*

The second Parliament in which Burke had a seat, was dissolved suddenly and without warning (October, 1774). The attitude of America was threatening, and it was believed the Ministers were anxious to have the elections over before the state of things became worse. The whole kingdom was instantly in a ferment. Couriers, chaises,

[1] *Speech on Relief of Protestant Dissenters*, 1773.

post-horses hurried in every direction over the island, and it was noted, as a measure of the agitation, that no fewer than sixty messengers passed through a single turnpike on one day. Sensible observers were glad to think that, in consequence of the rapidity of the elections, less wine and money would be wasted than at any election for sixty years past. Burke had a houseful of company at Beaconsfield when the news arrived. Johnson was among them, and as the party was hastily breaking up, the old Tory took his Whig friend kindly by the hand; "Farewell, my dear sir," he said, "and remember that I wish you all the success that ought to be wished to you, and can possibly be wished to you, by an honest man."

The words were of good omen. Burke was now rewarded by the discovery that his labours had earned for him recognition and gratitude beyond the narrow limits of a rather exclusive party. He had before this attracted the attention of the mercantile public. The Company of Merchants trading to Africa voted him their thanks for his share in supporting their establishments. The Committee of Trade at Manchester formally returned him their grateful acknowledgments for the active part that he had taken in the business of the Jamaica free ports. But then Manchester returned no representative to Parliament. In two Parliaments Burke had been elected for Wendover free of expense. Lord Verney's circumstances were now so embarrassed, that he was obliged to part with the four seats at his disposal to men who could pay for them. There had been some talk of proposing Burke for Westminster, and Wilkes, who was then omnipotent, promised him the support of the popular party. But the patriot's memory was treacherous, and he speedily forgot, for reasons of his own, an idea that had originated with himself. Burke's

constancy of spirit was momentarily overclouded. "Sometimes when I am alone," he wrote to Lord Rockingham (September 15, 1774), "in spite of all my efforts, I fall into a melancholy which is inexpressible, and to which, if I gave way, I should not continue long under it, but must totally sink. Yet I do assure you that partly, and indeed principally, by the force of natural good spirits, and partly by a strong sense of what I ought to do, I bear up so well that no one who did not know them, could easily discover the state of my mind or my circumstances. I have those that are dear to me, for whom I must live as long as God pleases, and in what way he pleases. Whether I ought not totally to abandon this public station for which I am so unfit, and have of course been so unfortunate, I know not." But he was always saved from rash retirement from public business by two reflections. He doubted whether a man has a right to retire after he has once gone a certain length in these things. And he remembered that there are often obscure vexations in the most private life, which as effectually destroy a man's peace as anything that can occur in public contentions.

Lord Rockingham offered his influence on behalf of Burke at Malton, one of the family boroughs in Yorkshire, and thither Burke in no high spirits betook himself. On his way to the north he heard that he had been nominated for Bristol, but the nomination had for certain electioneering reasons not been approved by the party. As it happened, Burke was no sooner chosen at Malton than, owing to an unexpected turn of affairs at Bristol, the idea of proposing him for a candidate revived. Messengers were sent express to his house in London, and, not finding him there, they hastened down to Yorkshire. Burke quickly resolved that the offer was too im-

portant to be rejected. Bristol was the capital of the west, and it was still in wealth, population, and mercantile activity the second city of the kingdom. To be invited to stand for so great a constituency, without any request of his own and free of personal expense, was a distinction which no politician could hold lightly. Burke rose from the table where he was dining with some of his supporters, stepped into a post-chaise at six on a Tuesday evening, and travelled without a break until he reached Bristol on the Thursday afternoon, having got over two hundred and seventy miles in forty-four hours. Not only did he execute the journey without a break, but, as he told the people of Bristol, with an exulting commemoration of his own zeal that recalls Cicero, he did not sleep for an instant in the interval. The poll was kept open for a month, and the contest was the most tedious that had ever been known in the city. New freemen were admitted down to the very last day of the election. At the end of it, Burke was second on the poll, and was declared to be duly chosen (November 3, 1774). There was a petition against his return, but the election was confirmed, and he continued to sit for Bristol for six years.

The situation of a candidate is apt to find out a man's weaker places. Burke stood the test. He showed none of the petulant rage of those clamorous politicians whose flight, as he said, is winged in a lower region of the air. As the traveller stands on the noble bridge that now spans the valley of the Avon, he may recall Burke's local comparison of these busy, angry familiars of an election, to the gulls that skim the mud of the river when it is exhausted of its tide. He gave his new friends a more important lesson, when the time came for him to thank them for the honour which they had just conferred upon him.

His colleague had opened the subject of the relations between a member of Parliament and his constituents; and had declared that, for his own part, he should regard the instructions of the people of Bristol as decisive and binding. Burke in a weighty passage upheld a manlier doctrine.

"Certainly, gentlemen, it ought to be the happiness and glory of a representative to live in the strictest union, the closest correspondence, and the most unreserved communication with his constituents. Their wishes ought to have great weight with him; their opinions high respect, their business unremitted attention. It is his duty to sacrifice his repose, his pleasure, his satisfactions, to theirs; and above all, ever, and in all cases, to prefer their interest to his own. But his unbiassed opinion, his mature judgment, his enlightened conscience, he ought not to sacrifice to you, to any man, or to any set of men living. Your representative owes you, not his industry only, but his judgment; and he betrays, instead of serving you, if he sacrifices it to your opinion.

"My worthy colleague says, his will ought to be subservient to yours. If that be all, the thing is innocent. If government were a matter of will upon any side, yours, without question, ought to be superior. But government and legislation are matters of reason and judgment, and not of inclination; and what sort of reason is that in which the determination precedes the discussion, in which one set of men deliberate and another decide, and where those who form the conclusion are perhaps three hundred miles distant from those who hear the arguments? *Authoritative* instructions, *mandates* issued, which the member is bound blindly and implicitly to obey, to vote, and to argue for, though contrary to the clearest convictions of his judgment and conscience—these are things utterly unknown to the laws of this land, and which arise from a fundamental mistake of the whole order and tenour of our Constitution."[1]

For six years the Bristol electors were content to be represented by a man of this independence. They never, however, really acquiesced in the principle that a member of Parliament owes as much to his own convictions as to

[1] *Speech at the conclusion of the Poll.*

the will of his constituents. In 1778 a bill was brought into Parliament, relaxing some of the restrictions imposed upon Ireland by the atrocious fiscal policy of Great Britain. The great mercantile centres raised a furious outcry, and Bristol was as blind and as boisterous as Manchester and Glasgow. Burke not only spoke and voted in favour of the commercial propositions, but urged that the proposed removal of restrictions on Irish trade did not go nearly far enough. There was none of that too familiar casuistry, by which public men argue themselves out of their consciences in a strange syllogism, that they can best serve the country in Parliament; that to keep their seats they must follow their electors; and that therefore, in the long run, they serve the country best by acquiescing in ignorance and prejudice. Anybody can denounce an abuse. It needs valour and integrity to stand forth against a wrong to which our best friends are most ardently committed. It warms our hearts to think of the noble courage with which Burke faced the blind and vile selfishness of his own supporters. He reminded them that England only consented to leave to the Irish in two or three instances the use of the natural faculties which God had given them. He asked them whether Ireland was united to Great Britain for no other purpose than that we should counteract the bounty of Providence in her favour; and whether, in proportion as that bounty had been liberal, we were to regard it as an evil to be met with every possible corrective? In our day there is nobody of any school who doubts that Burke's view of our trade policy towards Ireland was accurately, absolutely, and magnificently right. I need not repeat the arguments. They made no mark on the Bristol merchants. Burke boldly told them that he would rather run the risk of displeasing than of injuring

them. They implored him to become their advocate. "I should only disgrace myself," he said; "I should lose the only thing which can make such abilities as mine of any use to the world now or hereafter. I mean that authority which is derived from the opinion that a member speaks the language of truth and sincerity, and that he is not ready to take up or lay down a great political system for the convenience of the hour; that he is in Parliament to support his opinion of the public good, and does not form his opinion in order to get into Parliament or to continue in it."[1]

A small instalment of humanity to Ireland was not more distasteful to the electors of Bristol, than a small instalment of toleration to Roman Catholics in England. A measure was passed (1778) repealing certain iniquitous penalties created by an Act of William the Third. It is needless to say that this rudimentary concession to justice and sense was supported by Burke. His voters began to believe that those were right who had said that he had been bred at Saint Omer's, was a Papist at heart, and a Jesuit in disguise. When the time came, *summa dies et ineluctabile fatum*, Burke bore with dignity and temper his dismissal from the only independent constituency that he ever represented. Years before he had warned a young man entering public life, to regard and wish well to the common people, whom his best instincts and his highest duties lead him to love and to serve, but to put as little trust in them as in princes. Burke somewhere describes an honest public life as carrying on a poor unequal conflict against the passions and prejudices of our day, perhaps with no better weapons than passions and prejudices of our own.

[1] *Two Letters to Gentlemen in Bristol*, 1778.

The six years during which Burke sat in Parliament for Bristol, saw this conflict carried on under the most desperate circumstances. They were the years of the civil war between the English at home and the English in the American colonies. George III. and Lord North have been made scapegoats for sins which were not exclusively their own. They were only the organs and representatives of all the lurking ignorance and arbitrary humours of the entire community. Burke discloses in many places, that for once the King and Parliament did not act without the sympathies of the mass. In his famous speech at Bristol, in 1780, he was rebuking the intolerance of those who bitterly taunted him for the support of the measure for the relaxation of the Penal Code. "It is but too true," he said in a passage worth remembering, "that the love, and even the very idea, of genuine liberty is extremely rare. It is but too true that there are many whose whole scheme of freedom is made up of pride, perverseness, and insolence. They feel themselves in a state of thraldom, they imagine that their souls are cooped and cabined in, unless they have some man, or some body of men, dependent on their mercy. The desire of having some one below them, descends to those who are the very lowest of all; and a Protestant cobbler, debased by his poverty, but exalted by his share of the ruling church, feels a pride in knowing it is by his generosity alone that the peer, whose footman's instep he measures, is able to keep his chaplain from a gaol. This disposition is the true source of the passion which many men, in very humble life, have taken to the American war. *Our* subjects in America; *our* colonies; *our* dependents. This lust of party power is the liberty they hunger and thirst for; and this Siren

song of ambition has charmed ears that we would have thought were never organized to that sort of music."

This was the mental attitude of a majority of the nation, and it was fortunate for them and for us that the yeomen and merchants on the other side of the Atlantic had a more just and energetic appreciation of the crisis. The insurgents, while achieving their own freedom, were indirectly engaged in fighting the battle of the people of the mother country as well. Burke had a vehement correspondent who wrote to him (1777), that if the utter ruin of this country were to be the consequence of her persisting in the claim to tax America, then he would be the first to say, *Let her perish!* If England prevails, said Horace Walpole, English and American liberty is at an end; if one fell, the other would fall with it. Burke, seeing this, "certainly never could and never did wish," as he says of himself, "the colonists to be subdued by arms. He was fully persuaded that if such should be the event, they must be held in that subdued state by a great body of standing forces, and perhaps of foreign forces. He was strongly of opinion that such armies, first victorious over Englishmen, in a conflict for English constitutional rights and privileges, and afterwards habituated (though in America) to keep an English people in a state of abject subjection, would prove fatal in the end to the liberties of England itself."[4] The way for this remote peril was being sedulously prepared by a widespread deterioration among popular ideas, and a fatal relaxation of the hold which they had previously gained in the public mind. In order to prove that the Americans had no right to their liberties, we were every day endeavouring to subvert the maxims which preserve the whole spirit of our own

[4] *Appeal from the new to the old Whigs.*

To prove that the Americans ought not to be free, we were obliged to depreciate the value of freedom itself. The material strength of the Government, and its moral strength alike, would have been reinforced by the defeat of the colonists, to such an extent as to have seriously delayed or even jeopardized English progress, and therefore that of Europe too. As events actually fell out, the ferocious administration of the law in the last five or six years of the eighteenth century, was the retribution for the lethargy or approval with which the mass of the English community had watched the measures of the government against their fellow-Englishmen in America.

It is not necessary here to follow Burke minutely through the successive stages of parliamentary action in the American war. He always defended the settlement of 1766; the Stamp Act was repealed, and the constitutional supremacy and sovereign authority of the mother-country was preserved in a Declaratory Act. When the project of taxing the colonies was revived, and relations with them were becoming strained and dangerous, Burke came forward with a plan for leaving the General Assemblies of the colonies to grant supplies and aids, instead of giving and granting supplies in Parliament, to be raised and paid in the colonies. Needless to say that it was rejected, and perhaps it was not feasible. Henceforth Burke could only watch in impotence the blunders of government, and the disasters that befell the national arms. But his protests against the war will last as long as our literature.

Of all Burke's writings none are so fit to secure unqualified and unanimous admiration as the three pieces on this momentous struggle:—the Speech on American Taxation (April 19, 1774); the Speech on Conciliation with

America (March 22, 1775); and the Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol (1777). Together they hardly exceed the compass of the little volume which the reader now has in his hands. It is no exaggeration to say that they compose the most perfect manual in our literature, or in any literature, for one who approaches the study of public affairs, whether for knowledge or for practice. They are an example without fault of all the qualities which the critic, whether a theorist or an actor, of great political situations should strive by night and by day to possess. If the theme with which they deal were less near than it is to our interests and affections as free citizens, these three performances would still abound in the lessons of an incomparable political method. If their subject were as remote as the quarrel between the Corinthians and Corcyra, or the war between Rome and the Allies, instead of a conflict to which the world owes the opportunity of the most important of political experiments, we should still have everything to learn from the author's treatment; the vigorous grasp of masses of compressed detail, the wide illumination from great principles of human experience, the strong and masculine feeling for the two great political ends of Justice and Freedom, the large and generous interpretation of expediency, the morality, the vision, the noble temper. If ever, in the fulness of time, and surely the fates of men and literature cannot have it otherwise, Burke becomes one of the half-dozen names of established and universal currency in education and in common books, rising above the waywardness of literary caprice or intellectual fashions, as Shakespeare and Milton and Bacon rise above it, it will be the mastery, the elevation, the wisdom, of these far-shining discourses in which the

world will in an especial degree recognize the combination of sovereign gifts with beneficent uses.

The pamphlet on the *Present Discontents* is partially obscured or muffled to the modern reader, by the space which is given to the cabal of the day. The *Reflections on the French Revolution* over-abounds in declamation, and—apart from its being passionately on one side, and that perhaps the wrong one—the splendour of the eloquence is out of proportion to the reason and the judgment. In the pieces on the American war, on the contrary, Burke was conscious that he could trust nothing to the sympathy or the prepossessions of his readers, and this put him upon an unwonted persuasiveness. Here it is reason and judgment, not declamation; lucidity, not passion; that produces the effects of eloquence. No choler mars the page; no purple patch distracts our minds from the penetrating force of the argument; no commonplace is dressed up into a vague sublimity. The cause of freedom is made to wear its own proper robe of equity, self-control, and reasonableness.

Not one, but all those great idols of the political market-place whose worship and service has cost the race so dear, are discovered and shown to be the foolish uncouth stocks and stones that they are. Fox once urged members of parliament to peruse the speech on Conciliation again and again, to study it, to imprint it on their minds, to impress it on their hearts. But Fox only referred to the lesson which he thought to be contained in it, that representation is the sovereign remedy for every evil. This is by far the least important of its lessons. It is great in many ways. It is greatest as a remonstrance and an answer against the thriving sophisms of barbarous national pride, the eternal fallacies of war and conquest; and here it is great, as all the three

pieces on the subject are so, because they expose with unanswerable force the deep-lying faults of heart and temper, as well as of understanding, which move nations to haughty and violent courses.

The great argument with those of the war party who pretended to a political defence of their position, was the doctrine that the English government was sovereign in the colonies as at home; and in the notion of sovereignty they found inherent the notion of an indefeasible right to impose and exact taxes. Having satisfied themselves of the existence of this sovereignty, and of the right which they took to be its natural property, they saw no step between the existence of an abstract right, and the propriety of enforcing it. We have seen an instance of a similar mode of political thinking in our own lifetime. During the great civil war between the northern and southern states of the American Union, people in England convinced themselves—some after careful examination of documents, others by cursory glances at second-hand authorities—that the south had a right to secede. The current of opinion was precisely similar in the struggle to which the United States owed their separate existence. Now the idea of a right as a mysterious and reverend abstraction, to be worshipped in a state of naked divorce from expediency and convenience, was one that Burke's political judgment found preposterous and unendurable. He hated the arbitrary and despotic savour which clung about the English assumptions over the colonies. And his repulsion was heightened when he found that these assumptions were justified, not by some permanent advantage which their victory would procure for the mother country or for the colonies, or which would repay the cost of gaining such a victory; not by the assertion and

demonstration of some positive duty, but by the futile and meaningless doctrine that we had a right to do something or other, if we liked.

The alleged compromise of the national dignity implied in a withdrawal of the just claim of the government, instead of convincing, only exasperated him. "Show the thing you contend for to be reason; show it to be common sense; show it to be the means of attaining some useful end; and then I am content to allow it what dignity you please."[5] The next year he took up the ground still more firmly, and explained it still more impressively. As for the question of the right of taxation, he exclaimed, "It is less than nothing in my consideration. My consideration is narrow, confined, and wholly limited to the policy of the question. I do not examine whether the giving away a man's money be a power excepted and reserved out of the general trust of Government. *The question with me is not whether you have a right to render your people miserable, but whether it is not your interest to make them happy.* It is not what a lawyer tells me I *may* do, but what humanity, reason, and justice tell me I *ought* to do. I am not determining a point of law; I am restoring tranquillity, and the general character and situation of a people must determine what sort of government is fitted for them." "I am not here going into the distinctions of rights," he cries, "not attempting to mark their boundaries. I do not enter into these metaphysical distinctions. *I hate the very sound of them.* This is the true touchstone of all theories which regard man and the affairs of man: does it suit his nature in general?—does it suit his nature as modified by his habits?" He could not bear to think of having legis-

[5] *Speech on American Taxation.*

lative or political arrangements shaped or vindicated by a delusive geometrical accuracy of deduction, instead of being entrusted to "the natural operation of things, which, left to themselves, generally fall into their proper order."

Apart from his incessant assertion of the principle that man acts from adequate motives relative to his interests, and not on metaphysical speculations, Burke sows, as he marches along in his stately argument, many a germ of the modern philosophy of civilization. He was told that America was worth fighting for. "Certainly it is," he answered, "if fighting a people be the best way of gaining them." Every step that has been taken in the direction of progress, not merely in empire, but in education, in punishment, in the treatment of the insane, has shown the deep wisdom, so unfamiliar in that age of ferocious penalties and brutal methods, of this truth,—that "the natural effect of fidelity, clemency, kindness in governors, is peace, good-will, order, and esteem in the governed." Is there a single instance to the contrary? Then there is that sure key to wise politics:—"*Nobody shall persuade me when a whole people are concerned, that acts of lenity are not means of conciliation.*" And that still more famous sentence, "*I do not know the method of drawing up an indictment against a whole people.*"

Good and observant men will feel that no misty benevolence or vague sympathy, but the positive reality of experience, inspired such passages as that where he says,—"Never expecting to find perfection in men, and not looking for divine attributes in created beings, in my commerce with my contemporaries I have found much human virtue. The age unquestionably produces daring profligates and insidious hypocrites? What then? Am I not to avail myself of whatever good is to be found in

the world, because of the mixture of evil that is in it! Those who raise suspicions of the good, on account of the behaviour of evil men, are of the party of the latter. . . . A conscientious person would rather doubt his own judgment, than condemn his species. He that accuses all mankind of corruption, ought to remember that he is sure to convict only one. In truth I should much rather admit those whom at any time I have disrelished the most, to be patterns of perfection, than seek a consolation to my own unworthiness in a general communion of depravity with all about me." This is one of those pieces of rational constancy and mental wholeness in Burke, which fill up our admiration for him—one of the manifold illustrations of an invincible fidelity to the natural order and operation of things, even when they seemed most hostile to all that was dear to his own personality.

CHAPTER V.

ŒCONOMICAL REFORM—BURKE IN OFFICE—FALL OF HIS PARTY.

Towards 1780 it began to be clear that the ministers had brought the country into disaster and humiliation, from which their policy contained no way of escape. In the closing months of the American war, the Opposition pressed ministers with a vigour that never abated. Lord North bore their attacks with perfect good humour. When Burke, in the course of a great oration, parodied Burgoyne's invitation to the Indians to repair to the King's standard, the wit and satire of it almost suffocated the prime minister, not with shame but with laughter. His heart had long ceased to be in the matter, and everybody knew that he only retained his post in obedience to the urgent importunities of the king, whilst such colleagues as Rigby only clung to their place because the salaries were endeared by long familiarity. The general gloom was accidentally deepened by that hideous outbreak of fanaticism and violence, which is known as the Lord George Gordon Riots (June, 1780). The Whigs, as having favoured the relaxation of the laws against popery, were especially obnoxious to the mob. The government sent a guard of soldiers to protect Burke's house in Charles Street, St. James's;

but, after he had removed the more important of his papers, he insisted on the guard being dispatched for the protection of more important places, and he took shelter under the roof of General Burgoyne. His excellent wife, according to a letter of his brother, had "the firmness and sweetness of an angel; but why do I say of an angel?—of a woman." Burke himself courageously walked to and fro amid the raging crowds with firm composure, though the experiment was full of peril. He describes the mob as being made up, as London mobs generally are, rather of the unruly and dissolute than of fanatical malignants, and he vehemently opposed any concessions by Parliament to the spirit of intolerance which had first kindled the blaze. All the letters of the time show that the outrages and alarms of those days and nights, in which the capital seemed to be at the mercy of a furious rabble, made a deeper impression on the minds of contemporaries than they ought to have done. Burke was not likely to be less excited than others, by the sight of such insensate disorder; and it is no idle fancy that he had the mobs of 1780 still in his memory, when ten years later he poured out the vials of his wrath on the bloodier mob which carried the King and Queen of France in wild triumph from Versailles to Paris.

In the previous February (1780) Burke had achieved one of the greatest of all his parliamentary and oratorical successes. Though the matter of this particular enterprise is no longer alive, yet it illustrates his many strong qualities in so remarkable a way that it is right to give some account of it. We have already seen that Burke steadily set his face against parliamentary reform; he habitually declared that the machine was well enough to answer any good purpose, provided the materials were

sound. The statesman who resists all projects for the reform of the constitution, and yet eagerly proclaims how deplorably imperfect are the practical results of its working, binds himself to vigorous exertions for the amendment of administration. Burke devoted himself to this duty with a fervid assiduity that has not often been exampled, and has never been surpassed. He went to work with the zeal of a religious enthusiast, intent on purging his church and his faith of the corruptions which lowered it in the eyes of men. There was no part or order of government so obscure, so remote, or so complex, as to escape his acute and persevering observation.

Burke's object, in his schemes for Economical Reform, was less to husband the public resources and relieve the tax-payer—though this aim could not have been absent from his mind, overburdened as England then was with the charges of the American War—than to cut off the channels which supplied the corruption of the House of Commons. The full title of the first project which he presented to the legislature (February, 1780), was A Plan for the Better Security of the Independence of Parliament, and the Economical Reformation of the Civil and other Establishments. It was to the former that he deemed the latter to be the most direct road. The strength of the administration in the House was due to the gifts which the Minister had in his hands to dispense. Men voted with the side which could reward their fidelity. It was the number of sinecure places and unpublished pensions, which along with the controllable influence of peers and nabobs, furnished the Minister with an irresistible lever: the avarice and the degraded public spirit of the recipients supplied the required fulcrum. Burke knew that in sweeping away these factitious places and

secret pensions, he would be robbing the Court of its chief implements of corruption, and protecting the representative against his chief motive in selling his country. He conceived that he would thus be promoting a far more infallible means than any scheme of electoral reform could have provided, for reviving the integrity and independence of the House of Commons. In his eyes, the evil resided not in the constituencies, but in their representatives; not in the small number of the one, but in the smaller integrity of the other.

The evil did not stop where it began. It was not merely that the sinister motive, thus engendered in the minds of too lax and facile men, induced them to betray their legislative trust, and barter their own uprightness and the interests of the State. The acquisition of one of these nefarious bribes meant much more than a sinister vote. It called into existence a champion of every inveterate abuse that weighed on the resources of the country. There is a well-known passage in the speech on Economical Reform, in which the speaker shows what an insurmountable obstacle Lord Talbot had found in his attempt to carry out certain reforms in the royal household, in the fact that the turnspit of the King's kitchen was a member of Parliament. "On that rock his whole adventure split,—his whole scheme of economy was dashed to pieces; his department became more expensive than ever; the Civil List debt accumulated." Interference with the expenses of the household meant interference with the perquisites or fees of this legislative turnspit, and the rights of sinecures were too sacred to be touched. In comparison with them, it counted for nothing that the King's tradesmen went unpaid, and became bankrupt; that the judges were unpaid; that

"the justice of the kingdom bent and gave way; the foreign ministers remained inactive and unprovided; the system of Europe was dissolved; the chain of our alliances was broken; all the wheels of Government at home and abroad were stopped. *The king's turnspit was a member of Parliament.*"[1] This office and numbers of others exactly like it, existed solely because the House of Commons was crowded with venal men. The post of royal scullion meant a vote that could be relied upon under every circumstance and in all emergencies. And each incumbent of such an office felt his honour and interests concerned in the defence of all other offices of the same scandalous description. There was thus maintained a strong standing army of expensive, lax, and corrupting officials.

The royal household was a gigantic nest of costly jobbery and purposeless profusion. It retained all "the cumbrous charge of a Gothic establishment," though all its usage and accommodation had "shrunk into the polished littleness of modern elegance." The outlay was enormous. The expenditure on the court tables only was a thing unfathomable. Waste was the rule in every branch of it. There was an office for the Great Wardrobe, another office of the Robes, a third of the Groom of the Stole. For these three useless offices there were three useless treasurers. They all laid a heavy burden on the taxpayer, in order to supply a bribe to the member of parliament. The plain remedy was to annihilate the

[1] The Civil List at this time comprehended a great number of charges, such as those of which Burke speaks, that had nothing to do with the sovereign personally. They were slowly removed, the judicial and diplomatic charges being transferred on the accession of William IV.

subordinate treasuries. "Take away," was Burke's demand, "the whole establishment of detail in the household: the Treasurer, the Comptroller, the Cofferer of the Household, the Treasurer of the Chamber, the Master of the Household, the whole Board of Green Cloth; a vast number of subordinate offices in the department of the Steward of the Household; the whole establishment of the Great Wardrobe; the Removing Wardrobe; the Jewel Office; the Robes; the Board of Works." The abolition of this confused and costly system would not only diminish expense and promote efficiency; it would do still more excellent service in destroying the roots of parliamentary corruption. "Under other governments a question of expense is only a question of economy, and it is nothing more; with us, in every question of expense, there is always a mixture of constitutional considerations."

Places and pensions, though the worst, were not by any means the only stumbling-block in the way of pure and well-ordered government. The administration of the estates of the Crown,—the Principality, the Duchy of Cornwall, the Duchy of Lancaster, the County Palatine of Chester,—was an elaborate system of obscure and unprofitable expenditure. Wales had to herself eight judges, while no more than twelve sufficed to perform the whole business of justice in England, a country ten times as large, and a hundred times as opulent. Wales, and each of the duchies, had its own exchequer. Every one of these principalities, said Burke, has the apparatus of a kingdom, for the jurisdiction over a few private estates; it has the formality and charge of the Exchequer of Great Britain, for collecting the rents of a country squire. They were the field, in his expressive phrase, of mock juris-

dictions and mimic revenues, of difficult trifles and laborious fooleries. "It was but the other day that that pert factious fellow, the Duke of Lancaster, presumed to fly in the face of his liege lord, our gracious sovereign—presumed to go to law with the King. The object is neither your business nor mine. Which of the parties got the better I really forget. The material point is that the suit cost about 15,000*l*. But as the Duke of Lancaster is but agent of Duke Humphrey, and not worth a groat, our sovereign was obliged to pay the costs of both." The system which involved these costly absurdities, Burke proposed entirely to abolish. In the same spirit he wished to dispose of the Crown lands and the forest lands, which it was for the good of the community, not less than of the Crown itself, to throw into the hands of private owners.

One of the most important of these projected reforms, and one which its author did not flinch from carrying out two years later to his own loss, related to the office of Paymaster. This functionary was accustomed to hold large balances of the public money in his own hands and for his own profit, for long periods, owing to a complex system of accounts which was so rigorous as entirely to defeat its own object. The Paymaster could not, through the multiplicity of forms and the exaction of impossible conditions, get a prompt acquittance. The audit sometimes did not take place for years after the accounts were virtually closed. Meanwhile, the money accumulated in his hands, and its profits were his legitimate perquisite. Lord Holland, or his representatives, held the balances of his office from 1765, when he retired, until 1778, when they were audited. During this time he realized, as the interest on the use of these

balances, nearly two hundred and fifty thousand pounds. Burke diverted these enormous gains into the coffers of the state. He fixed the Paymaster's salary at four thousand pounds a year, and was himself the first person who accepted the curtailed income.

Not the most fervid or brilliant of Burke's pieces, yet the Speech on Economical Reform is certainly not the least instructive or impressive of them. It gives a suggestive view of the relations existing at that time between the House of Commons and the Court. It reveals the narrow and unpatriotic spirit of the King and the ministers, who could resist proposals so reasonable in themselves, and so remedial in their effects, at a time when the nation was suffering the heavy and distressing burdens of the most disastrous war that our country has ever carried on. It is especially interesting as an illustration of its author's political capacity. At a moment when committees and petitions and great county meetings showed how thoroughly the national anger was roused against the existing system, Burke came to the front of affairs with a scheme, of which the most striking characteristic proved to be that it was profoundly temperate. Bent on the extirpation of the system, he had no ill-will towards the men who had happened to flourish in it. "I never will suffer," he said, "any man or description of men to suffer from errors that naturally have grown out of the abusive constitution of those offices which I propose to regulate. If I cannot reform with equity, I will not reform at all." Exasperated as he was by the fruitlessness of his opposition to a policy which he detested from the bottom of his soul, it would have been little wonderful if he had resorted to every weapon of his unrivalled rhetorical armoury, in order to discredit and overthrow the whole

scheme of government. Yet nothing could have been further from his mind than any violent or extreme idea of this sort. Many years afterwards he took credit to himself less for what he did on this occasion, than for what he prevented from being done. People were ready for a new modelling of the two Houses of Parliament, as well as for grave modifications of the Prerogative. Burke resisted this temper unflinchingly. "I had," he says, "a state to preserve, as well as a state to reform. I had a people to gratify, but not to inflame or to mislead." He then recounts without exaggeration the pains and caution with which he sought reform, while steering clear of innovation. He heaved the lead every inch of way he made. It is grievous to think that a man who could assume such an attitude at such a time, who could give this kind of proof of his skill in the great, the difficult, art of governing, only held a fifth-rate office for some time less than a twelvemonth.

The year of the project of Economic Reform (1780) is usually taken as the date when Burke's influence and repute were at their height. He had not been tried in the fire of official responsibility, and his impetuosity was still under a degree of control which not long afterwards was fatally weakened by an over-mastering irritability of constitution. High as his character was now in the ascendant, it was in the same year that Burke suffered the sharp mortification of losing his seat at Bristol. His speech before the election is one of the best known of all his performances; and it well deserves to be so, for it is surpassed by none in gravity, elevation, and moral dignity. We can only wonder that a constituency which could suffer itself to be addressed on this high level, should have allowed the small selfishness of local interest to weigh against such

wisdom and nobility. But Burke soon found in the course of his canvas that he had no chance, and he declined to go to the poll. On the previous day one of his competitors had fallen down dead. "*What shadows we are,*" said Burke, "*and what shadows we pursue!*"

In 1782 Lord North's government came to an end, and the king "was pleased," as Lord North quoted with jesting irony from the Gazette, to send for Lord Rockingham, Charles Fox, and Lord Shelburne. Members could hardly believe their own eyes, as they saw Lord North and the members of a government which had been in place for twelve years, now lounging on the opposition benches in their greatcoats, frocks, and boots, while Fox and Burke shone in the full dress that was then worn by ministers, and cut unwonted figures with swords, lace, and hair-powder. Sheridan was made an under-secretary of state, and to the younger Pitt was offered his choice of various minor posts, which he haughtily refused. Burke, to whom on their own admission the party owed everything, was appointed Paymaster of the Forces, with a salary of four thousand pounds a year. His brother, Richard Burke, was made Secretary of the Treasury. His son, Richard, was named to be his father's deputy at the Pay Office, with a salary of five hundred pounds.

This singular exclusion from cabinet office of the most powerful genius of the party, has naturally given rise to abundant criticism ever since. It will be convenient to say what there is to be said on this subject, in connexion with the events of 1788 (below, p. 138), because there happens to exist some useful information about the ministerial crisis of that year, which sheds a clearer light upon the arrangements of six years before. Meanwhile it is enough to say that Burke himself had

most reasonably looked to some higher post. There is the distinct note of the humility of mortified pride in a letter written in reply to some one who had applied to him for a place. "You have been misinformed," he says; "I make no part of the ministerial arrangement. Something in the official line may possibly be thought fit for my measure." Burke knew that his position in the country entitled him to something above the official line. In a later year, when he felt himself called upon to defend his pension, he described what his position was in the momentous crisis from 1780 to 1782, and Burke's habitual veraciousness forbids us to treat the description as in any way exaggerated. "By what accident it matters not," he says, "nor upon what desert, but just then, and in the midst of that hunt of obloquy which has ever pursued me with a full cry through life, I had obtained a very full degree of public confidence. Nothing to prevent disorder was omitted; when it appeared, nothing to subdue it was left uncounselled nor unexecuted, as far as I could prevail. At the time I speak of, and having a momentary lead, so aided and so encouraged, and as a feeble instrument in a mighty hand—I do not say I saved my country—I am sure I did my country important service. There were few indeed that did not at that time acknowledge it—and that time was thirteen years ago. It was but one view, that no man in the kingdom better deserved an honourable provision should be made for him."[2]

We have seen that Burke had fixed the Paymaster's salary at four thousand pounds, and had destroyed the extravagant perquisites. The other economical reforms which were actually effected, fell short by a long way of those

[2] *Letter to a Noble Lord.*

which Burke had so industriously devised and so forcibly recommended. In 1782, while Burke declined to spare his own office, the chief of the cabinet conferred upon Barré a pension of over three thousand a year; above ten times the amount, as has been said, which, in Lord Rockingham's own judgment, as expressed in the new Bill, ought henceforth to be granted to any one person whatever. This shortcoming, however, does not detract from Burke's merit. He was not responsible for it. The eloquence, ingenuity, diligence, above all, the sagacity and the justice of this great effort of 1780, are none the less worthy of our admiration and regard because, in 1782, his chiefs, partly perhaps out of a newborn deference for the feelings of their royal master, showed that the possession of office had sensibly cooled the ardent aspirations proper to Opposition.

The events of the twenty months between the resignation of Lord North (1782) and the accession of Pitt to the office of Prime Minister (December, 1783,) mark an important crisis in political history, and they mark an important crisis in Burke's career and hopes. Lord Rockingham had just been three months in office, when he died (July, 1782). This dissolved the bond that held the two sections of the ministry together, and let loose a flood of rival ambitions and sharp animosities. Lord Shelburne believed himself to have an irresistible claim to the chief post in the administration; among other reasons, because he might have had it before Lord Rockingham three months earlier, if he had so chosen. The King supported him, not from any partiality to his person, but because he dreaded and hated Charles Fox. The character of Shelburne is one of the perplexities of the time. His views on peace and free trade make him one of the

precursors of the Manchester School. No minister was so well informed as to the threads of policy in foreign countries. He was the intimate or the patron of men who now stand out as among the first lights of that time—of Morellet, of Priestley, of Bentham. Yet a few months of power seem to have disclosed faults of character, which left him without a single political friend, and blighted him with irreparable discredit. Fox, who was now the head of the Rockingham section of the Whigs, had, before the death of the late premier, been on the point of refusing to serve any longer with Lord Shelburne, and he now very promptly refused to serve under him. When Parliament met after Rockingham's death, gossips noticed that Fox and Burke continued, long after the Speaker had taken the chair, to walk backwards and forwards in the Court of Requests, engaged in earnest conversation. According to one story, Burke was very reluctant to abandon an office whose emoluments were as convenient to him as to his spendthrift colleague. According to another and more probable legend, it was Burke who hurried the rupture, and stimulated Fox's jealousy of Shelburne. The Duke of Richmond disapproved of the secession, and remained in the government. Sheridan also disapproved, but he sacrificed his personal conviction to loyalty to Fox.

If Burke was responsible for the break-up of the government, then he was the instigator of a blunder that must be pronounced not only disastrous but culpable. It lowered the legitimate spirit of party to the nameless spirit of faction. The dangers from which the old liberties of the realm had just emerged, have been described by no one so forcibly as by Burke himself. No one was so convinced as Burke that the only way of withstanding the arbitrary and corrupting policy of the Court was to

form a strong Whig party. No one knew better than he the sovereign importance and the immense difficulty of repairing the ruin of the last twelve years by a good peace. The Rockingham or Foxite section were obviously unable to form an effective party with serious expectation of power, unless they had allies. They might, no doubt, from personal dislike to Lord Shelburne, refuse to work under him; but personal dislike could be no excuse for formally and violently working against him, when his policy was their own, and when its success was recognized by them no less than by him as of urgent moment. Instead of either working with the other section of their party, or of supporting from below the gangway that which was the policy of both sections, they sought to return to power by coalescing with the very man whose criminal subservience to the King's will had brought about the catastrophe that Shelburne was repairing. Burke must share the blame of this famous transaction. He was one of the most furious assailants of the new ministry. He poured out a fresh invective against Lord Shelburne every day. Cynical contemporaries laughed as they saw him in search of more and more humiliating parallels, ransacking all literature from the Bible and the Roman history down to Mother Goose's tales. His passion carried him so far as to breed a reaction in those who listened to him. "I think," wrote Mason from Yorkshire, where Burke had been on a visit to Lord Fitzwilliam in the autumn of 1782, "that Burke's mad obloquy against Lord Shelburne, and these insolent pamphlets in which he must have had a hand, will do more to fix him (Shelburne) in his office than anything else."

This result would have actually followed, for the nation was ill pleased at the immoral alliance between the Foxites

and the man whom, if they had been true to their opinions a thousand times repeated, they ought at that moment to have been impeaching. The Dissenters, who had hitherto been his enthusiastic admirers, but who are rigid above other men in their demand of political consistency, lamented Burke's fall in joining the Coalition, as Priestley told him many years after, as the fall of a friend and a brother. But Shelburne threw away the game. "His falsehoods," says Horace Walpole, "his flatteries, duplicity, insincerity, arrogance, contradictions, neglect of his friends, with all the kindred of all these faults, were the daily topics of contempt and ridicule; and his folly shut his eyes, nor did he perceive that so very rapid a fall must have been owing to his own incapacity." This is the testimony of a hostile witness. It is borne out, however, by a circumstance of striking significance. When the King recovered the reins at the end of 1783, not only did he send for Pitt instead of for Shelburne, but Pitt himself neither invited Shelburne to join him, nor in any way ever consulted him then or afterwards, though he had been Chancellor of the Exchequer in Shelburne's own administration.

Whatever the causes may have been, the administration fell in the spring of 1783. It was succeeded by the memorable ministry of the Coalition, in which Fox and Lord North divided the real power under the nominal lead of the Duke of Portland. Members saw Lord North squeezed up on the Treasury bench between two men who had a year before been daily menacing him with the axe and the block; and it was not North whom they blamed, but Burke and Fox. Burke had returned to the Pay Office. His first act there was unfortunate. He restored to their position two clerks who had been suspended for

malversation, and against whom proceedings were then pending. When attacked for this in the House, he showed an irritation which would have carried him to gross lengths, if Fox and Sheridan had not by main force pulled him down into his seat by the tails of his coat. The restoration of the clerks was an indefensible error of judgment, and its indiscretion was heightened by the kind of defence which Burke tried to set up. When we wonder at Burke's exclusion from great offices, this case of Powell and Bembridge should not be forgotten.

The decisive event in the history of the Coalition Government was the India Bill. The Reports of the various select committees upon Indian affairs—the most important of them all, the ninth and eleventh, having been drawn up by Burke himself—had shown conclusively that the existing system of government was thoroughly corrupt and thoroughly inadequate. It is ascertained pretty conclusively, that the bill for replacing that system was conceived and drawn by Burke, and that to him belongs whatever merit or demerit it might possess. It was Burke who infected Fox with his own ardour, and then, as Moore justly says, the self-kindling power of Fox's eloquence threw such fire into his defence of the measure, that he forgot, and his hearers never found out, that his views were not originally and spontaneously his own. The novelty on which the great stress of discussion was laid, was that the bill withdrew power from the Board of Directors, and vested the government for four years in a commission of seven persons named in the bill, and not removable by the House.

Burke was so convinced of the incurable iniquity of the Company, so persuaded that it was not only full of abuses, but, as he said, one of the most corrupt and destructive

tyrannies that probably ever existed in the world, as to be content with nothing short of the absolute deprivation of its power. He avowed himself no lover of names, and that he only contended for good government, from whatever quarter it might come. But the idea of good government coming from the Company, he declared to be desperate and untenable. This intense animosity, which, considering his long and close familiarity with the infamies of the rule of the Company's servants, was not unnatural, must be allowed, however, to have blinded him to the grave objections which really existed to his scheme. In the first place, the Bill was indisputably inconsistent with the spirit of his revered Constitution. For the legislature to assume the power of naming the members of an executive body, was an extraordinary and mischievous innovation. Then, to put patronage, which has been estimated by a sober authority at about three hundred thousand pounds a year, into the hands of the House of Commons, was still more mischievous and still less justifiable. Worst of all, from the point of view of the projectors themselves, after a certain time the nomination of the Commissioners would fall to the Crown, and this might in certain contingencies increase to a most dangerous extent the ascendancy of the royal authority. If Burke's measure had been carried, moreover, the patronage would have been transferred to a body much less competent than the Directors to judge of the qualities required in the fulfilment of this or that administrative charge. Indian promotion would have followed parliamentary and party interest. In the hands of the Directors there was at least a partial security, in their professional knowledge, and their personal interest in the success of their government, that places would not be given away on

irrelevant considerations. Their system, with all its faults, insured the acquisition of a certain considerable competency in administration, before a servant reached an elevation at which he could do much harm.

Burke defended the bill (December 1, 1783) in one of the speeches which rank only below his greatest, and it contains two or three passages of unsurpassed energy and impressiveness. Everybody knows the fine page about Fox as the descendant of Henry IV. of France, and the happy quotation from Silius Italicus. Every book of British eloquence contains the magnificent description of the young magistrates who undertake the government and the spoliation of India; how, "animated with all the avarice of age, and all the impetuosity of youth, they roll in one after another, wave after wave; and there is nothing before the eyes of the natives but an endless, hopeless prospect of new flights of birds of prey and of passage, with appetites continually renewing for a food that is continually wasting." How they return home laden with spoil; "their prey is lodged in England; and the cries of India are given to seas and winds, to be blown about, in every breaking up of the monsoon, over a remote and unhearing ocean." How in India all the vices operate by which sudden fortune is acquired; while in England are often displayed by the same person the virtues which dispense hereditary wealth, so that "here the manufacturer and the husbandman will bless the just and punctual hand that in India has torn the cloth from the loom, or wrested the scanty portion of rice and salt from the peasant of Bengal, or wrung from him the very opium in which he forgot his oppression and his oppressors."

No degree of eloquence, however, could avail to repair faults alike in structure and in tactics. The whole design

was a masterpiece of hardihood, miscalculation, and mismanagement. The combination of interests against the bill was instant, and it was indeed formidable. The great army of returned nabobs, of directors, of proprietors of East India stock, rose up in all its immense force. Every member of every corporation that enjoyed privilege by charter, felt the attack on the Company as if it had been a blow directed against himself. The general public had no particular passion for purity or good government, and the best portion of the public was disgusted with the Coalition. The King saw his chance. With politic audacity he put so strong a personal pressure on the peers, that they threw out the Bill (December, 1783). It was to no purpose that Fox compared the lords to the Janissaries of a Turkish Sultan, and the King's letter to Temple, to the rescript in which Tiberius ordered the upright Sejanus to be destroyed. Ministers were dismissed, the young Pitt was installed in their place, and the Whigs were ruined. As a party, they had a few months of office after Pitt's death, but they were excluded from power for half a century.

CHAPTER VI.

BURKE AND HIS FRIENDS.

THOUGH Burke had, at a critical period of his life, definitely abandoned the career of letters, he never withdrew from close intimacy with the groups who still live for us in the pages of Boswell, as no other literary group in our history lives. Goldsmith's famous lines in *Retaliation* show how they all deplored that he should to party give up, what was meant for mankind. They often told one another that Edmund Burke was the man whose genius pointed him out as the triumphant champion of faith and sound philosophy against deism, atheism, and David Hume. They loved to see him, as Goldsmith said, wind into his subject like a serpent. Everybody felt at the Literary Club that he had no superior in knowledge, and in colloquial dialectics only one equal. Garrick was there, and of all the names of the time he is the man whom one would perhaps most willingly have seen, because the gifts which threw not only Englishmen, but Frenchmen like Diderot, and Germans like Lichtenberg, into amazement and ecstasy, are exactly those gifts which literary description can do least to reproduce. Burke was one of his strongest admirers, and there was no more zealous attendant at the closing series of performances in which the great monarch of the stage abdicated his throne. In the last pages that he

wrote, Burke refers to his ever dear friend Garrick, dead nearly twenty years before, as the first of actors because he was the acutest observer of nature that he had ever known. Then among men who pass for being more serious than players, Robertson was often in London society, and he attracted Burke by his largeness and breadth. He sent a copy of his history of America, and Burke thanked him with many stately compliments for having employed philosophy to judge of manners, and from manners having drawn new resources of philosophy. Gibbon was there, but the bystanders felt what was too crudely expressed by Mackintosh, that Gibbon might have been taken from a corner of Burke's mind without ever being missed. Though Burke and Gibbon constantly met, it is not likely that, until the Revolution, there was much intimacy between them, in spite of the respect which each of them might well have had for the vast knowledge of the other. When the *Decline and Fall* was published, Burke read it as everybody else did; but he told Reynolds that he disliked the style, as very affected, mere frippery and tinsel. Sir Joshua himself was neither a man of letters nor a keen politician; but he was full of literary ideas and interests, and he was among Burke's warmest and most constant friends, following him with an admiration and reverence that even Johnson sometimes thought excessive. The reader of Reynolds's famous Discourses will probably share the wonder of his contemporaries, that a man whose time was so absorbed in the practice of his art, should have proved himself so excellent a master in the expression of some of its principles. Burke was commonly credited with a large share in their composition, but the evidence goes no further than that Reynolds used to talk them over with him. The friendship between the pair was full and

unalloyed. What Burke admired in the great artist was his sense and his morals, no less than his genius; and to a man of his fervid and excitable temper there was the most attractive of all charms in Sir Joshua's placidity, gentleness, evenness, and the habit, as one of his friends described it, of being the same all the year round. When Reynolds died in 1792, he appointed Burke one of his executors, and left him a legacy of two thousand pounds, besides cancelling a bond of the same amount.

Johnson, however, is the only member of that illustrious company who can profitably be compared with Burke in strength and impressiveness of personality, in a large sensibility at once serious and genial, in brooding care for all the fulness of human life. This striking pair were the two complements of a single noble and solid type, holding tenaciously, in a century of dissolvent speculation, to the best ideas of a society that was slowly passing. They were powerless to hinder the inevitable transformation. One of them did not even dimly foresee it. But both of them help us to understand how manliness and reverence, strength and tenderness, love of truth and pity for man, all flourished under old institutions and old ways of thinking, into which the forces of the time were even then silently breathing a new spirit. The friendship between Burke and Johnson lasted as long as they lived; and if we remember that Johnson was a strong Tory, and declared that the first Whig was the devil, and habitually talked about cursed Whigs and bottomless Whigs, it is an extraordinary fact that his relations with the greatest Whig writer and politician of his day were marked by a cordiality, respect, and admiration that never varied nor wavered. "Burke," he said in a well-known passage, "is such a man that if you met him for the first time in the street, where you

were stopped by a drove of oxen, and you and he stepped aside to take shelter but for five minutes, he'd talk to you in such a manner that, when you parted, you would say, This is an extraordinary man. He is never what we would call humdrum; never unwilling to begin to talk, nor in haste to leave off." That Burke was as good a listener as he was a talker, Johnson never would allow. "So desirous is he to talk," he said, "that if one is talking at this end of the table, he'll talk to somebody at the other end." Johnson was far too good a critic, and too honest a man, to assent to a remark of Robertson's, that Burke had wit. "No, sir," said the sage, most truly, "he never succeeds there. 'Tis low, 'tis conceit." Wit apart, he described Burke as the only man whose common conversation corresponded to his general fame in the world; take up whatever topic you might please, he was ready to meet you. When Burke found a seat in Parliament, Johnson said, "Now we who know Burke, know that he will be one of the first men in the country." He did not grudge that Burke should be the first man in the House of Commons, for Burke, he said, was always the first man everywhere. Once when he was ill, somebody mentioned Burke's name. Johnson cried out, "That fellow calls forth all my powers; were I to see Burke now it would kill me."

Burke heartily returned this high appreciation. When some flatterer hinted that Johnson had taken more than his right share of the evening's talk, Burke said, "Nay, it is enough for me to have rung the bell for him." Some one else spoke of a successful imitation of Johnson's style. Burke with vehemence denied the success: the performance, he said, had the pomp, but not the force of the original; the nodosities of the oak, but not its strength;

the contortions of the sibyl, but none of the inspiration. When Burke showed the old sage of Bolt Court over his fine house and pleasant gardens at Beaconsfield, *Non invideo equidem*, Johnson said, with placid good-will, *miror magis*. They always parted in the deep and pregnant phrase of a sage of our own day, *except in opinion not disagreeing*. In truth the explanation of the sympathy between them is not far to seek. We may well believe that Johnson was tacitly alive to the essentially conservative spirit of Burke even in his most Whiggish days. And Burke penetrated the liberality of mind in a Tory, who called out with loud indignation that the Irish were in a most unnatural state, for there the minority prevailed over the majority, and the severity of the persecution exercised by the Protestants of Ireland against the Catholics, exceeded that of the ten historic persecutions of the Christian Church.

The parties at Beaconsfield, and the evenings at the Turk's Head in Gerard Street, were contemporary with the famous days at Holbach's country house at Grandval. When we think of the reckless themes that were so recklessly discussed by Holbach, Diderot, and the rest of that indefatigable band, we feel that, as against the French philosophic party, an English Tory like Johnson and an English Whig like Burke would have found their own differences too minute to be worth considering. If the group from the Turk's Head could have been transported for an afternoon to Grandval, perhaps Johnson would have been the less impatient and disgusted of the two. He had the capacity of the more genial sort of casuist for playing with subjects, even moral subjects, with the freedom, versatility, and ease that are proper to literature. Burke, on the contrary, would not have failed to see, as indeed we know that he did not fail to see, that a social pandemonium was being

prepared in this intellectual paradise of open questions, where God and a future life, marriage and the family, every dogma of religion, every prescription of morality, and all those mysteries and pieties of human life which have been sanctified by the reverence of ages, were being busily pulled to pieces as if they had been toys in the hands of a company of sportive children. Even the *Beggar's Opera* Burke could not endure to hear praised for its wit or its music, because his mind was filled by thought of its misplaced levity, and he only saw the mischief which such a performance tended to do to society. It would be hard to defend his judgment in this particular case, but it serves to show how Burke was never content with the literary point of view, and how ready and vigilant he was for effects more profound than those of formal criticism. It is true that Johnson was sometimes not less austere in condemning a great work of art for its bad morality. The only time when he was really angry with Hannah More was on his finding that she had read *Tom Jones*—that vicious book, he called it; he hardly knew a more corrupt work. Burke's tendency towards severity of moral judgment, however, never impaired the geniality and tenderness of his relations with those whom he loved. Bennet Langton gave Boswell an affecting account of Burke's last interview with Johnson. A few days before the old man's death, Burke and four or five other friends were sitting round his bedside. "Mr. Burke said to him, 'I am afraid, sir, such a number of us may be oppressive to you.' 'No, sir,' said Johnson, 'it is not so; and I must be in a wretched state indeed, when your company is not a delight to me.' Mr. Burke, in a tremulous voice, expressive of being very tenderly affected, replied, 'My dear sir, you have always been too good to me.' Immediately

afterwards he went away. This was the last circumstance in the acquaintance of these two eminent men."

One of Burke's strongest political intimacies was only less interesting and significant than his friendship with Johnson. William Dowdeswell had been Chancellor of the Exchequer in the short Rockingham administration of 1765. He had no brilliant gifts, but he had what was then thought a profound knowledge both of the principles and details of the administration of the national revenue. He was industrious, steadfast, clear-headed, inexorably upright. "Immersed in the greatest affairs," as Burke said in his epitaph, "he never lost the ancient, native, genuine, English character of a country gentleman." And this was the character in which Burke now and always saw not only the true political barrier against despotism on the one hand and the rabble on the other, but the best moral type of civic virtue. Those who admire Burke, but cannot share his admiration for the country gentleman, will perhaps justify him by the assumption that he clothed his favourite with ideal qualities which ought, even if they did not, to have belonged to that position.

In his own modest imitation and on his own humble scale, he was a pattern of the activity in public duty, the hospitality towards friends, the assiduous protection of neglected worth, which ought to be among the chief virtues of high station. It would perhaps be doubly unsafe to take for granted that many of our readers have both turned over the pages of Crabbe's *Borough*, and carried away in their minds from that moderately affecting poem, the description of Eusebius,—

> That pious moralist, that reasoning saint!
> Can I of worth like thine, Eusebius, speak?
> The man is willing, but the muse is weak.

Eusebius is intended for Burke, and the portrait is a literary tribute for more substantial services. When Crabbe came up from his native Aldborough, with three pounds and a case of surgical instruments in his trunk, he fondly believed that a great patron would be found to watch over his transformation from an unsuccessful apothecary into a popular poet. He wrote to Lord North and Lord Shelburne, but they did not answer his letters; booksellers returned his copious manuscripts; the three pounds gradually disappeared; the surgical instruments went to the pawnbroker's; and the poet found himself an outcast on the world, without a friend, without employment, and without bread. He owed money for his lodging, and was on the very eve of being sent to prison, when it occurred to him to write to Burke. It was the moment (1781) when the final struggle with Lord North was at its fiercest, and Burke might have been absolved if, in the stress of conflict, he had neglected a begging-letter. As it was, the manliness and simplicity of Crabbe's application touched him. He immediately made an appointment with the young poet, and convinced himself of his worth. He not only relieved Crabbe's immediate distress with a sum of money that, as we know, came from no affluence of his own, but carried him off to Beaconsfield, installed him there as a member of the family, and took as much pains to find a printer for *The Library* and *The Village*, as if they had been poems of his own. In time he persuaded the Bishop of Norwich to admit Crabbe, in spite of his want of a regular qualification, to holy orders. He then commended him to the notice of Lord Chancellor Thurlow. Crabbe found the Tiger less formidable than his terrifying reputation, for Thurlow at their first interview presented him

with a hundred-pound note and afterwards gave him a living. The living was of no great value, it is true; and it was Burke who, with untiring friendship, succeeded in procuring something like a substantial position for him, by inducing the Duke of Rutland to make the young parson his chaplain. Henceforth Crabbe's career was assured, and he never forgot to revere and bless the man to whose generous hand he owed his deliverance.

Another of Burke's clients, of whom we hardly know whether to say that he is more or less known to our age than Crabbe, is Barry, a painter of disputable eminence. The son of a seafarer at Cork, he had been introduced to Burke in Dublin in 1762, was brought over to England by him, introduced to some kind of employment, and finally sent, with funds provided by the Burkes, to study art on the continent. It was characteristic of Burke's willingness not only to supply money but, what is a far rarer form of kindness, to take active trouble, that he should have followed the raw student with long and careful letters of advice upon the proper direction of his studies. For five years Barry was maintained abroad by the Burkes. Most unhappily for himself he was cursed with an irritable and perverse temper, and he lacked even the elementary arts of conduct. Burke was generous to the end, with that difficult and uncommon kind of generosity which moves independently of gratitude or ingratitude in the receiver.

From his earliest days Burke had been the eager friend of people in distress. While he was still a student at the Temple, or a writer for the booksellers, he picked up a curious creature in the park, in such unpromising circumstances that he could not forbear to take him under his instant protection. This was Joseph Emin, the

Armenian, who had come to Europe from India with strange heroic ideas in his head as to the deliverance of his countrymen. Burke instantly urged him to accept the few shillings that he happened to have in his purse, and seems to have found employment for him as a copyist, until fortune brought other openings to the singular adventurer. For foreign visitors Burke had always a singular considerateness. Two Brahmins came to England as agents of Ragonaut Rao, and at first underwent intolerable things rather from the ignorance than the unkindness of our countrymen. Burke no sooner found out what was passing, than he carried them down to Beaconsfield, and as it was summer-time he gave them for their separate use a spacious garden-house, where they were free to prepare their food and perform such rites as their religion prescribed. Nothing was so certain to command his fervid sympathy as strict adherence to the rules and ceremonies of an ancient and sacred ordering.

If he never failed to perform the offices to which we are bound by the common sympathy of men, it is satisfactory to think that Burke in return received a measure of these friendly services. Among those who loved him best was Doctor Brocklesby, the tender physician who watched and soothed the last hours of Johnson. When we remember how Burke's soul was harassed by private cares, chagrined by the untoward course of public events, and mortified by neglect from friends no less than by virulent reproach from foes, it makes us feel very kindly towards Brocklesby, to read what he wrote to Burke in 1788 :—

My very dear friend,—

My veneration of your public conduct for many years past, and my real affection for your private virtues and transcendent worth, made me yesterday take a liberty with you in a moment's

conversation at my house, to make you an instant present of 1000*l.*, which for years past I had by will destined as a testimony of my regard on my decease. This you modestly desired me not to think of; but I told you what I now repeat, that unfavoured as I have lived for a long life, unnoticed professionally by any party of men, and though unknown at court, I am rich enough to spare to virtue (what others waste in vice) the above sum, and still reserve an annual income greater than I spend. I shall receive at the India House a bill I have discounted for 1000*l.* on the 4th of next month, and then shall be happy that you will accept this proof of my sincere love and esteem, and let me add, *Si res ampla domi similisque affectibus esset*, I should be happy to repeat the like every year."

The mere transcription of the friendly man's good letter has something of the effect of an exercise of religion. And it was only one of a series of kind acts on the part of the same generous giver.

It is always interesting in the case of a great man to know how he affected the women of his acquaintance. Women do not usually judge character either so kindly or so soundly as men do, for they lack that knowledge of the ordeals of practical life, which gives both justice and charity to such verdicts. But they are more susceptible than most men are to devotion and nobility in character. The little group of the blue-stockings of the day regarded the great master of knowledge and eloquence with mixed feelings. They felt for Burke the adoring reverence which women offer, with too indiscriminate a trust, to men of commanding power. In his case it was the moral loftiness of his character that inspired them, as much as the splendour of his ability. Of Sheridan or of Fox they could not bear to hear; of Burke they could not hear enough. Hannah More, and Mrs. Elizabeth Carter, the learned translator of Epictetus, and Fanny Burney, the author of *Evelina* and *Cecilia*, were all proud of his notice,

even while they glowed with anger at his sympathy with American rebels, his unkind words about the King, and his cruel persecution of poor Mr. Hastings. It was at Mrs. Vesey's evening parties, given on the Tuesdays on which the Club dined at the Turk's Head, that he often had long chats with Hannah More. She had to forget what she called his political malefactions, before she could allow herself to admire his high spirits and good humour. This was after the events of the Coalition, and her Memoirs, like the change in the mind of the Dissenters towards Burke, show what a fall that act of faction was believed to mark in his character. When he was rejected for Bristol, she moralized on the catastrophe by the quaint reflection, that Providence has wisely contrived to render all its dispensations equal, by making those talents which set one man so much above another, of no esteem in the opinion of those who are without them.

Miss Burney has described her flutter of spirits when she first found herself in company with Burke (1782). It was at Sir Joshua's house on the top of Richmond Hill, and she tells, with her usual effusion, how she was impressed by Burke's noble figure and commanding air, his penetrating and sonorous voice, his eloquent and copious language, the infinite variety and rapidity of his discourse. Burke had something to say on every subject, from bits of personal gossip, up to the sweet and melting landscape that lay in all its beauty before their windows on the terrace. He was playful, serious, fantastic, wise. When they next met, the great man completed his conquest by expressing his admiration of *Evelina*. Gibbon assured her that he had read the whole five volumes in a day; but Burke declared the feat was

impossible, for he had himself read it through without interruption, and it had cost him three days. He showed his regard for the authoress in a more substantial way than by compliments and criticism. His last act, before going out of office, in 1783, was to procure for Dr. Burney the appointment of organist at the chapel of Chelsea.

We have spoken of the dislike of these excellent women for Sheridan and Fox. In Sheridan's case Burke did not much disagree with them. Their characters were as unlike and as antipathetic as those of two men could be; and to antipathy of temperament was probably added a kind of rivalry, which may justly have affected one of them with an irritated humiliation. Sheridan was twenty years younger than Burke, and did not come into Parliament until Burke had fought the prolonged battle of the American war, and had achieved the victory of Economic Reform. Yet Sheridan was immediately taken up by the party, and became the intimate and counsellor of Charles Fox, its leader, and of the Prince of Wales, its patron. That Burke never failed to do full justice to Sheridan's brilliant genius, or to bestow generous and unaffected praise on his oratorical successes, there is ample evidence. He was of far too high and veracious a nature to be capable of the disparaging tricks of a poor jealousy. The humiliation lay in the fact that circumstances had placed Sheridan in a position, which made it natural for the world to measure them with one another. Burke could no more like Sheridan, than he could like the *Beggar's Opera*. Sheridan had a levity, a want of depth, a laxity and dispersion of feeling, to which no degree of intellectual brilliancy could reconcile a man of such profound moral energy and social conviction as Burke.

The thought will perhaps occur to the reader that

Fox was not less lax than Sheridan, and yet for Fox Burke long had the sincerest friendship. He was dissolute, indolent, irregular, and the most insensate gambler that ever squandered fortune after fortune over the faro-table. It was his vices as much as his politics, that made George III. hate Fox as an English Catiline. How came Burke to accept a man of this character, first for his disciple, then for his friend, and next for his leader? The answer is a simple one. In spite of the disorders of his life, Fox, from the time when his acquaintance with Burke began, down to the time when it came to such disastrous end, and for long years afterwards, was to the bottom of his heart as passionate for freedom, justice, and beneficence as Burke ever was. These great ends were as real, as constant, as overmastering in Fox as they were in Burke. No man was ever more deeply imbued with the generous impulses of great statesmanship, with chivalrous courage, with the magnificent spirit of devotion to high imposing causes. These qualities we may be sure, and not his power as a debater and as a declaimer, won for him in Burke's heart the admiration which found such splendid expression in a passage that will remain as a stock piece of declamation for long generations after it was first poured out as a sincere tribute of reverence and affection. Precisians, like Lafayette, might choose to see their patriotic hopes ruined rather than have them saved by Mirabeau, because Mirabeau was a debauchee. Burke's public morality was of stouter stuff, and he loved Fox because he knew that under the stains and blemishes that had been left by a deplorable education, was that sterling, inexhaustible ore in which noble sympathies are subtly compounded with resplendent powers.

If he was warmly attached to his political friends, Burke, at least before the Revolution, was usually on fair terms in private life with his political opponents. There were few men whose policy he disliked more than he disliked the policy of George Grenville. And we have seen that he criticized Grenville in a pamphlet which did not spare him. Yet Grenville and he did not refuse one another's hospitality, and were on the best terms to the very end. Wilberforce, again, was one of the staunchest friends of Pitt, and fought one of the greatest electioneering battles on Pitt's side in the struggle of 1784; but it made no difference in Burke's relations with him. In 1787 a coldness arose between them. Burke had delivered a strong invective against the French Treaty. Wilberforce said, "We can make allowance for the honourable gentleman, because we remember him in better days." The retort greatly nettled Burke, but the feeling soon passed away, and they both found a special satisfaction in the dinner to which Wilberforce invited Burke every session. "He was a great man," says Wilberforce. "I could never understand how at one time he grew to be so entirely neglected."

Outside of both political and literary circles, among Burke's correspondents was that wise and honest traveller whose name is as inseparably bound up with the preparation of the French Revolution, as Burke's is bound up with its sanguinary climax and fulfilment. Arthur Young, by his Farmer's Letters, and Farmer's Calendar, and his account of his travels in the southern counties of England and elsewhere—the story of the more famous travels in France was not published until 1792—had won a reputation as the best informed agriculturist of his day. Within a year of his settlement at Beaconsfield, we find Burke writing to

consult Young on the mysteries of his new occupation. The reader may smile as he recognizes the ardour, the earnestness, the fervid gravity of the political speeches, in letters which discuss the merits of carrots in fattening porkers, and the precise degree to which they should be boiled. Burke throws himself just as eagerly into white peas and Indian corn, into cabbages that grow into head and cabbages that shoot into leaves, into experiments with pumpkin seed and wild parsnip, as if they had been details of the Stamp Act, or justice to Ireland. When he complains that it is scarcely possible for him, with his numerous avocations, to get his servants to enter fully into his views as to the right treatment of his crops, we can easily understand that his farming did not help him to make money. It is impossible that he should have had time or attention to spare for the effectual direction of even a small farm.

Yet if the farm brought scantier profit than it ought to have brought, it was probably no weak solace in the background of a life of harassing interests and perpetual disappointments. Burke was happier at Beaconsfield than anywhere else, and he was happiest there when his house was full of guests. Nothing pleased him better than to drive a visitor over to Windsor, where he would expatiate with enthusiasm "on the proud Keep, rising in the majesty of proportion, and girt with the double belt of its kindred and coeval towers, overseeing and guarding the subjected land." He delighted to point out the house at Uxbridge where Charles I. had carried on the negotiations with the Parliamentary Commissioners; the beautiful grounds of Bulstrode, where Judge Jefferies had once lived; and the churchyard of Beaconsfield, where lay the remains of Edmund Waller, the poet. He was fond of talking of

great statesmen—of Walpole, of Pulteney, and of Chatham. Some one had said that Chatham knew nothing whatever except Spenser's *Faery Queen*. "No matter how that was said," Burke replied to one of his visitors, "whoever relishes and reads Spenser as he ought to be read, will have a strong hold of the English language." The delight of the host must have been at least equalled by the delight of the guest in conversation which was thus ever taking new turns, branching into topical surprises, and at all turns and on every topic was luminous, high, edifying, full.

No guest was more welcome than the friend of his boyhood, and Richard Shackleton has told how the friendship, cordiality, and openness with which Burke embraced him was even more than might be expected from long love. The simple Quaker was confused by the sight of what seemed to him so sumptuous and worldly a life, and he went to rest uneasily, doubting whether God's blessing could go with it. But when he awoke on the morrow of his first visit, he told his wife, in the language of his sect, how glad he was "to find no condemnation; but on the contrary, ability to put up fervent petitions with much tenderness on behalf of this great luminary." It is at his country home that we like best to think of Burke. It is still a touching picture to the historic imagination to follow him from the heat and violence of the House, where tipsy squires derided the greatest genius of his time, down to the calm shades of Beaconsfield, where he would with his own hands give food to a starving beggar, or medicine to a peasant sick of the ague; where he would talk of the weather, the turnips, and the hay with the team-men and the farm-bailiff; and where, in the evening stillness, he would pace the walk under the trees, and reflect on the state of Europe and the distractions of his country.

CHAPTER VII.

THE NEW MINISTRY—WARREN HASTINGS—BURKE'S PUBLIC POSITION.

The six years which followed the destruction of the Coalition were, in some respects, the most mortifying portion of Burke's troubled career. Pitt was more firmly seated in power than Lord North had ever been, and he used his power to carry out a policy against which it was impossible for the Whigs, on their own principles, to offer an effective resistance. For this is the peculiarity of the King's first victory over the enemies who had done obstinate battle with him for nearly a quarter of a century. He had driven them out of the field, but with the aid of an ally who was as strongly hostile to the royal system as they had ever been. The King had vindicated his right against the Whigs to choose his own ministers; but the new minister was himself a Whig by descent, and a reformer by his education and personal disposition.

Ireland was the subject of the first great battle between the ministry and their opponents. Here, if anywhere, we might have expected from Burke at least his usual wisdom and patience. We saw in a previous chapter (p. 23) what the political condition of Ireland was, when Burke went there with Hamilton in 1763. The American war had brought about a great change.

The King had shrewdly predicted that if America became free, Ireland would soon follow the same plan and be a separate state. In fact, along with the American war we had to encounter an Irish war also; but the latter was, as an Irish politician called it at the time, a smothered war. Like the Americans, the Anglo-Irish entered into non-importation compacts, and they interdicted commerce. The Irish volunteers, first forty, then sixty, and at last a hundred thousand strong, were virtually an army enrolled to overawe the English ministry and Parliament. Following the spirit, if not the actual path, of the Americans, they raised a cry for commercial and legislative independence. They were too strong to be resisted, and in 1782 the Irish Parliament acquired the privilege of initiating and conducting its own business, without the sanction or control either of the Privy Council or of the English Parliament. Dazzled by the chance of acquiring legislative independence, they had been content with the comparatively small commercial boons obtained by Lord Nugent and Burke in 1778, and with the removal of further restrictions by the alarmed minister in the following year. After the concession of their independence in 1782, they found that to procure the abolition of the remaining restrictions on their commerce—the right of trade, for instance, with America and Africa—the consent of the English legislature was as necessary as it had ever been. Pitt, fresh from the teaching of Adam Smith and of Shelburne, brought forward in 1785 his famous commercial propositions. The theory of his scheme was that Irish trade should be free, and that Ireland should be admitted to a permanent participation in commercial advantages. In return for this gain, after her hereditary revenue passed a certain point, she was to devote the sur-

plus to purposes, such as the maintenance of the navy, in which the two nations had a common interest. Pitt was to be believed when he declared that of all the objects of his political life this was, in his opinion, the most important that he had ever engaged in, and he never expected to meet another that should rouse every emotion in so strong a degree as this.

A furious battle took place in the Irish Parliament. There, while nobody could deny that the eleven propositions would benefit the mercantile interests of the country, it was passionately urged that the last of the propositions, that which concerned the apportionment of Irish revenue to imperial purposes, meant the enslavement of their unhappy island. Their fetters, they went on, were clenched, if the English Government was to be allowed thus to take the initiative in Irish legislation. The factious course pursued by the English Opposition was much less excusable than the line of the Anglo-Irish leaders. Fox, who was ostentatiously ignorant of political economy, led the charge. He insisted that Pitt's measures would annihilate English trade, would destroy the Navigation Laws, and with them would bring our maritime strength to the ground. Having thus won the favour of the English manufacturers, he turned round to the Irish Opposition, and conciliated them by declaring with equal vehemence that the propositions were an insult to Ireland, and a nefarious attempt to tamper with her new-born liberties. Burke followed his leader. We may almost say that for once he allowed his political integrity to be bewildered. In 1778 and 1779 he had firmly resisted the pressure which his mercantile constituents in Bristol had endeavoured to put upon him; he had warmly supported the Irish claims, and had lost his seat in con-

sequence. The precise ground which he took up in 1785 was this. He appears to have discerned in Pitt's proposals the germ of an attempt to extract revenue from Ireland, identical in purpose, principle, and probable effect with the ever-memorable attempt to extract revenue from the American Colonies. Whatever stress may be laid upon this, we find it hard to vindicate Burke from the charge of factiousness. Nothing can have been more unworthy of him than the sneer at Pitt in the great speech on the Nabob of Arcot's debts (1785), for stopping to pick up chaff and straws from the Irish revenue, instead of checking profligate expenditure in India.

Pitt's alternative was irresistible. Situated as Ireland was, she must either be the subservient instrument of English prosperity, or else she must be allowed to enjoy the benefits of English trade, taking at the same time a proportionate share of the common burdens. Adam Smith had shown that there was nothing incompatible with justice in a contribution by Ireland to the public debt of Great Britain. That debt, he argued, had been contracted in support of the government established by the Revolution; a government to which the Protestants of Ireland owed not only the whole authority which they enjoyed in their own country, but every security which they possessed for their liberty, property, and religion. The neighbourhood of Ireland to the shores of the mother country introduced an element into the problem, which must have taught every unimpassioned observer that the American solution would be inadequate for a dependency that lay at our very door. Burke could not, in his calmer moments, have failed to recognize all this. Yet he lent himself to the party cry that Pitt was taking his first measures for the re-enslavement of Ireland. Had it not been for what he him-

self called the delirium of the preceding session, and which had still not subsided, he would have seen that Pitt was in truth taking his first measures for the effective deliverance of Ireland from an unjust and oppressive subordination. The same delirium committed him to another equally deplorable perversity, when he opposed, with as many excesses in temper as fallacies in statesmanship, the wise treaty with France, in which Pitt partially anticipated the commercial policy of an ampler treaty three-quarters of a century afterwards.

A great episode in Burke's career now opened. It was in 1785 that Warren Hastings returned from India, after a series of exploits as momentous and far-reaching, for good or evil, as have ever been achieved by any English ruler. For years Burke had been watching India. With rising wonder, amazement, and indignation he had steadily followed that long train of intrigue and crime which had ended in the consolidation of a new empire. With the return of Hastings he felt that the time had come for striking a severe blow, and making a signal example. He gave notice (June, 1785) that he would, at a future day, make a motion respecting the conduct of a gentleman just returned from India.

Among minor considerations, we have to remember that Indian affairs entered materially into the great battle of parties. It was upon an Indian bill that the late ministry had made shipwreck. It was notoriously by the aid of potent Indian interests that the new ministry had acquired a portion of its majority. To expose the misdeeds of our agents in India was at once to strike the minister who had dexterously secured their support, and to attack one of the great strongholds of parliamentary corruption. The proceedings against Hastings were, in the

first instance, regarded as a sequel to the struggle over Fox's East India Bill. That these considerations were present in Burke's thought there is no doubt, but they were purely secondary. It was India itself that stood above all else in his imagination. It had filled his mind and absorbed his time while Pitt was still an undergraduate at Cambridge, and Burke was looking forward to match his plan of economic reform with a greater plan of Indian reform. In the Ninth Report, the Eleventh Report, and in his speech on the India Bill of 1783, he had shown both how thoroughly he had mastered the facts, and how profoundly they had stirred his sense of wrong. The masterpiece known as the Speech on the Nabob of Arcot's debts, delivered in Parliament on a motion for papers (1785), handles matters of account, of interest turned into principal, and principal superadded to principal; it deals with a hundred minute technicalities of teeps and tuncaws, of gomastahs and soucaring; all with such a suffusion of interest and colour, with such nobility of idea and expression, as could only have come from the addition to genius of a deep morality of nature, and an overwhelming force of conviction. A space less than one of these pages contains such a picture of the devastation of the Carnatic by Hyder Ali, as may fill the young orator or the young writer with the same emotions of enthusiasm, emulation, and despair that torment the artist who first gazes on the Madonna at Dresden, or the figures of Night and Dawn and the Penseroso at Florence. The despair is only too well founded. No conscious study could pierce the secret of that just and pathetic transition from the havoc of Hyder Ali to the healing duties of a virtuous government, to the consolatory celebration of the mysteries of justice and humanity, to the warning to the

unlawful creditors to silence their inauspicious tongues in presence of the holy work of restoration, to the generous proclamation against them that in every country the first creditor is the plough. The emotions which make the hidden force of such pictures come not by observation. They grow from the sedulous meditation of long years, directed by a powerful intellect and inspired by an interest in human well-being, which of its own virtue bore the orator into the sustaining air of the upper gods. Concentrated passion and exhaustive knowledge have never entered into a more formidable combination. Yet, when Burke made his speech on the Nabob of Arcot's debts, Pitt and Grenville consulted together whether it was worth answering, and came to the conclusion that they need not take the trouble.

Neither the scornful neglect of his opponents, nor the dissuasions of some who sat on his own side, could check the ardour with which Burke pressed on, as he said, to the relief of afflicted nations. The fact is, that Burke was not at all a philanthropist as Clarkson and Wilberforce were philanthropists. His sympathy was too strongly under the control of true political reason. In 1780, for instance, the slave-trade had attracted his attention, and he had even proceeded to sketch out a code of regulations which provided for its immediate mitigation and ultimate suppression. After mature consideration he abandoned the attempt, from the conviction that the strength of the West India interest would defeat the utmost efforts of his party. And he was quite right in refusing to hope from any political action, what could only be effected after the moral preparation of the bulk of the nation. And *direct* moral or philanthropic apostleship was not his function.

Macaulay, in a famous passage of dazzling lustre and

fine historic colour, describes Burke's holy rage against the misdeeds of Hastings, as due to his sensibility. But sensibility to what? Not merely to those common impressions of human suffering which kindle the flame of ordinary philanthropy, always attractive, often so beneficent, but often so capricious and so laden with secret detriment. This was no part of Burke's type. Nor is it enough to say that Burke had what is the distinctive mark of the true statesman, a passion for good, wise, and orderly government. He had that in the strongest degree. All that wore the look of confusion he held in abhorrence, and he detected the seeds of confusion with a penetration that made other men marvel. He was far too wise a man to have any sympathy with the energetic exercise of power for power's sake. He knew well that triumphs of violence are for the most part little better than temporary makeshifts, which leave all the work of government to be encountered afterwards by men of essentially greater capacity than the hero of force without scruple. But he regarded those whom he called the great bad men of the old stamp, Cromwell, Richelieu, the Guises, the Condés, with a certain tolerance, because "though the virtues of such men were not to be taken as a balance to their crimes, yet they had long views, and sanctified their ambition by aiming at the orderly rule, and not the destruction of their country." What he valued was the deep-seated order of systems that worked by the accepted uses, opinions, beliefs, prejudices of a community.

This love of right and stable order was not all. That was itself the growth from a deeper root, partly of conviction and partly of sympathy; the conviction of the rare and difficult conjunctures of circumstance which are needed for the formation of even the rudest forms

of social union among mankind; and then the sympathy that the best men must always find it hard to withhold from any hoary fabric of belief, and any venerated system of government, that has cherished a certain order and shed even a ray of the faintest dawn, among the violences and the darkness of the race. It was reverence rather than sensibility, a noble and philosophic conservatism rather than philanthropy, which raised the storm in Burke's breast against the rapacity of English adventurers in India, and the imperial crimes of Hastings. Exactly the same tide of emotion which afterwards filled to the brim the cup of prophetic anger against the desecrators of the church and the monarchy of France, now poured itself out against those who in India had "tossed about, subverted and tore to pieces, as if it were in the gambols of boyish unluckiness and malice, the most established rights, and the most ancient and most revered institutions of ages and nations." From beginning to end of the fourteen years in which Burke pursued his campaign against Hastings, we see in every page that the India which ever glowed before his vision, was not the home of picturesque usages and melodramatic costume, but rather, in his own words, the land of princes once of great dignity, authority and opulence; of an ancient and venerable priesthood, the guides of the people while living, and their consolation in death; of a nobility of antiquity and renown; of millions of ingenious mechanics, and millions of diligent tillers of the earth; and finally, the land where might be found almost all the religions professed by men, the Brahminical, the Mussulman, the Eastern and the Western Christian. When he published his speech on the Nabob of Arcot, Burke prefixed to it an admirable quotation from one of the letters of the Emperor Julian. And Julian too, as we all know, had a strong feeling for

the past. But what in that remarkable figure was only the sentimentalism of reaction, in Burke was a reasoned and philosophic veneration for all old and settled order, whether in the free Parliament of Great Britain, in the ancient absolutism of Versailles, or in the secular pomp of Oude and the inviolable sanctity of Benares, the holy city and the garden of God.

It would be out of place here to attempt to follow the details of the impeachment. Every reader has heard that great tale in our history, and everybody knows that it was Burke's tenacity and power which caused that tale to be told. The House of Commons would not, it is true, have directed that Hastings should be impeached, unless Pitt had given his sanction and approval, and how it was that Pitt did give his sanction and approval so suddenly and on grounds ostensibly so slender, remains one of the secrets of history. In no case would the impeachment have been pressed upon Parliament by the Opposition, and assented to by ministers, if Burke had not been there with his prodigious industry, his commanding comprehensive vision, his burning zeal, and his power of kindling in men so different from him and from one another as Fox, Sheridan, Windham, Grey, a zeal only less intense than his own.

It was in the spring of 1786 that the articles of charge of Hastings's high crimes and misdemeanours, as Burke had drawn them, were presented to the House of Commons. It was in February, 1788, that Burke opened the vast cause in the old historic hall at Westminster, in an oration in which at points he was wound up to such a pitch of eloquence and passion that every listener, including the great criminal, held his breath in an agony of horror; that women were carried out fainting; that the speaker himself became incapable of saying another word, and the specta-

tors of the scene began to wonder whether he would not, like the mighty Chatham, actually die in the exertion of his overwhelming powers. Among the illustrious crowd who thronged Westminster Hall in the opening days of the impeachment, was Fanny Burney. She was then in her odious bondage at Court, and was animated by that admiration and pity for Hastings which at Court was the fashion. Windham used to come up from the box of the managers of the impeachment to talk over with her the incidents of the day, and she gave him her impressions of Burke's speech, which were probably those of the majority of his hearers, for the majority were favourable to Hastings. "I told him," says Miss Burney, "that Mr. Burke's opening had struck me with the highest admiration of his powers, from the eloquence, the imagination, the fire, the diversity of expression, and the ready flow of language with which he seemed gifted, in a most superior manner, for any and every purpose to which rhetoric could lead." "And when he came to his two narratives," I continued, "when he related the particulars of those dreadful murders, he interested, he engaged, he at last overpowered me; I felt my cause lost. I could hardly keep on my seat. My eyes dreaded a single glance towards a man so accused as Mr. Hastings; I wanted to sink on the floor, that they might be saved so painful a sight. I had no hope he could clear himself; not another wish in his favour remained. But when from this narration Mr. Burke proceeded to his own comments and declamation—when the charges of rapacity, cruelty, tyranny, were general, and made with all the violence of personal detestation, and continued and aggravated without any further fact or illustration; then there appeared more of study than of truth, more of invective than of justice; and,

in short, so little of proof to so much of passion, that in a very short time I began to lift up my head, my seat was no longer uneasy, my eyes were indifferent which way they looked, or what object caught them, and before I was myself aware of the declension of Mr. Burke's powers over my feelings, I found myself a mere spectator in a public place, and looking all around it, with my opera-glass in my hand!"

In 1795, six years after Burke's opening, the Lords were ready with their verdict. It had long been anticipated. Hastings was acquitted. This was the close of the fourteen years of labour, from the date of the Select Committee of 1781. "If I were to call for a reward," Burke said, "it would be for the services in which for fourteen years, without intermission, I showed the most industry and had the least success. I mean the affairs of India; they are those on which I value myself the most; most for the importance; most for the labour; most for the judgment; most for constancy and perseverance in the pursuit."

The side that is defeated on a particular issue, is often victorious in the wide and general outcome. Looking back across the ninety years that divide us from that memorable scene in Westminster Hall, we may see that Burke had more success than at first appeared. If he did not convict the man, he overthrew a system, and stamped its principles with lasting censure and shame. Burke had perhaps a silent conviction that it would have been better for us and for India, if Clive had succeeded in his attempt to blow out his own brains in the Madras counting-house, or if the battle of Plassy had been a decisive defeat instead of a decisive victory. "All these circumstances," he once said, in reference to the results of the investigation of the Select Committee, "are not, I confess, very favourable to

the idea of our attempting to govern India at all. But there we are: there we are placed by the Sovereign Disposer, and we must do the best we can in our situation. The situation of man is the preceptor of his duty." If that situation is better understood now than it was a century ago, and that duty more loftily conceived, the result is due, so far as such results can ever be due to one man's action apart from the confluence of the deep impersonal elements of time, to the seeds of justice and humanity which were sown by Burke and his associates. Nobody now believes that Clive was justified in tricking Omichund by forging another man's name; that Impey was justified in hanging Nuncomar for committing the very offence for which Clive was excused or applauded, although forgery is no grave crime according to Hindoo usage, and it is the gravest according to English usage; that Hastings did well in selling English troops to assist in the extermination of a brave people with whom he was at peace; that Benfield did well in conniving with an Eastern prince in a project of extortion against his subjects. The whole drift of opinion has changed, and it is since the trial of Hastings that the change has taken place. The question in Burke's time was whether oppression and corruption were to continue to be the guiding maxims of English policy. The personal disinterestedness of the ruler who had been the chief founder of this policy, and had most openly set aside all pretence of righteous principle, was dust in the balance. It was impossible to suppress the policy without striking a deadly blow at its most eminent and powerful instrument. That Hastings was acquitted, was immaterial. The lesson of his impeachment had been taught with sufficiently impressive force—the great lesson that Asiatics have rights, and that Europeans have obli-

gations; that a superior race is bound to observe the highest current morality of the time in all its dealings with the subject race. Burke is entitled to our lasting reverence as the first apostle and great upholder of integrity, mercy, and honour in the relation between his countrymen and their humble dependents.

He shared the common fate of those who dare to strike a blow for human justice against the prejudices of national egotism. But he was no longer able to bear obloquy and neglect, as he had borne it through the war with the colonies. When he opened the impeachment of Hastings at Westminster, Burke was very near to his sixtieth year. Hannah More noted in 1786 that his vivacity had diminished, and that business and politics had impaired his agreeableness. The simpletons in the House, now that they had at last found in Pitt a political chief who could beat the Whig leaders on their own ground of eloquence, knowledge, and dexterity in debate, took heart as they had never done under Lord North. They now made deliberate attempts to silence the veteran by unmannerly and brutal interruptions, of which a mob of lower class might have been ashamed. Then suddenly came a moment of such excitement as has not often been seen in the annals of party. It became known one day in the autumn of 1788, that the King had gone out of his mind.

The news naturally caused the liveliest agitation among the Whigs. When the severity of the attack forced the ministry to make preparations for a Regency, the friends of the Prince of Wales assumed that they would speedily return to power, and hastened to form their plans accordingly. Fox was travelling in Italy with Mrs. Armstead, and he had been two months away without hearing a word from England. The Duke of Portland sent a messenger in search

of him, and after a journey of ten days the messenger found him at Bologna. Fox instantly set off in all haste for London, which he reached in nine days. The three months that followed were a time of unsurpassed activity and bitterness, and Burke was at least as active and as bitter as the rest of them. He was the writer of the Prince of Wales's letter to Pitt, sometimes set down to Sheridan, and sometimes to Gilbert Elliot. It makes us feel how naturally the style of ideal kingship, its dignity, calm, and high self-consciousness all came to Burke. Although we read of his thus drawing up manifestoes and protests, and deciding minor questions for Fox, which Fox was too irresolute to decide for himself, yet we have it on Burke's own authority that some time elapsed after the return to England before he even saw Fox; that he was not consulted as to the course to be pursued in the grave and difficult questions connected with the Regency; and that he knew as little of the inside of Carlton House, where the Prince of Wales lived, as of Buckingham House, where the King lived. "I mean to continue here," he says to Charles Fox, "until you call upon me; and I find myself perfectly easy, from the implicit confidence that I have in you and the Duke, and the certainty that I am in that you two will do the best for the general advantage of the cause. In that state of mind I feel no desire whatsoever of interfering." Yet the letter itself, and others which follow, testify to the vehemence of Burke's interest in the matter, and to the persistency with which he would have had them follow his judgment, if they would have listened. It is as clear that they did not listen.

Apart from the fierce struggle against Pitt's Regency Bill, Burke's friends were intently occupied with the reconstruction of the Portland cabinet, which the king

had so unexpectedly dismissed five years before. This was a sphere in which Burke's gifts were neither required nor sought. We are rather in distress, Sir Gilbert Elliot writes, for a proper man for the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer. "Lord J. Cavendish is very unwilling to engage again in public affairs. Fox is to be Secretary of State. Burke, it is thought, would not be approved of, Sheridan has not the public confidence, and so it comes down therefore to Grey, Pelham, myself, and perhaps Windham." Elliot was one of Burke's most faithful and attached friends, and he was intimately concerned in all that was going on in the inner circle of the party. It is worth while, therefore, to reproduce his account from a confidential letter to Lady Elliot, of the way in which Burke's claim to recognition was at this time regarded and dealt with.

Although I can tell you nothing positive about my own situation, I was made very happy indeed yesterday by co-operating in the settlement of Burke's, in a manner which gives us great joy as well as comfort. The Duke of Portland has felt distressed how to arrange Burke and his family in a manner equal to Burke's merits, and to the Duke's own wishes, and at the same time so as to be exempt from the many difficulties which seem to be in the way. He sent for Pelham and me, as Burke's friends and his own, to advise with us about it; and we dined yesterday with him and the Duchess, that we might have time to talk the thing over at leisure and without interruption after dinner. We stayed accordingly, engaged in that subject till almost twelve at night, and our conference ended most happily, and excessively to the satisfaction of us all. The Duke of Portland has the veneration for Burke that Windham, Pelham, myself and a few more have, and he thinks it impossible to do too much for him. He considers the reward to be given to Burke as a credit and honour to the nation, and he considers the neglect of him and his embarrassed situation as having been long a reproach to the country. The unjust prejudice and clamour which has prevailed against him and his family only determine the Duke the more to do him

justice. The question was how? First, his brother Richard, who was Secretary to the Treasury before, will have the same office now, but the Duke intends to give him one of the first offices which falls vacant, of about 1000*l.* a year for life in the Customs, and he will then resign the Secretary to the Treasury, which, however, in the meanwhile is worth 3000*l.* a year. Edmund Burke is to have the Pay Office, 4000*l.* a year; but as that is precarious and he can leave no provision for his son, it would, in fact, be doing little or nothing of any real or substantial value unless some *permanent* provision is added to it. In this view the Duke is to grant him on the Irish establishment a pension of 2000*l.* a year *clear* for his own life, and the other half to Mrs. Burke for her life. This will make Burke completely happy, by leaving his wife and son safe from want after his death, if they should survive him. The Duke's affectionate anxiety to accomplish this object, and his determination to set all clamour at defiance on this point of justice, was truly affecting, and increases my attachment for the Duke. . . . The Duke said the only objection to this plan was that he thought it was due from this country, and that he grudged the honour of it to Ireland; but as nothing in England was ready, this plan was settled. You may think it strange that to this moment Burke does not know a word of all this, and his family are indeed, I believe, suffering a little under the apprehension that he may be neglected in the general scramble. I believe there never were three cabinet counsellors more in harmony on any subject than we were, nor three people happier in their day's work.[1]

This leaves the apparent puzzle where it was. Why should Burke not be approved of for Chancellor of the Exchequer? What were the many difficulties described as seeming to be in the way of arranging for Burke, in a manner equal to Burke's merits and the Duke of Portland's wishes? His personal relations with the chiefs of his party were at this time extremely cordial and intimate. He was constantly a guest at the Duke of Portland's most private dinner-parties. Fox had gone down to Beaconsfield to recruit himself from the fatigues

[1] *Life and Letters of Sir G. Elliot*, i. 261–3.

of his rapid journey from Bologna, and to spend some days in quiet with Windham and the master of the house. Elliot and Windham, who were talked about for a post for which one of them says that Burke would not have been approved, vied with one another in adoring Burke. Finally, Elliot and the Duke think themselves happy in a day's work, which ended in consigning the man who not only was, but was admitted to be, the most powerful genius of their party, to a third-rate post, and that most equivocal distinction, a pension on the Irish establishment. The common explanation that it illustrates Whig exclusiveness, cannot be seriously received as adequate. It is probable, for one thing, that the feelings of the Prince of Wales had more to do with it, than the feelings of men like the Duke of Portland or Fox. We can easily imagine how little that most worthless of human creatures would appreciate the great qualities of such a man as Burke. The painful fact which we are unable to conceal from ourselves is, that the common opinion of better men than the Prince of Wales leaned in the same direction. His violence in the course of the Regency debates had produced strong disapproval in the public, and downright consternation in his own party. On one occasion he is described by a respectable observer as having "been wilder than ever, and laid himself and his party more open than ever speaker did. He is folly personified, but shaking his cap and bells under the laurel of genius. He finished his wild speech in a manner next to madness." Moore believes that Burke's indiscretions in these trying and prolonged transactions sowed the seeds of the alienation between him and Fox two years afterwards. Burke's excited state of mind showed itself in small things as well as great. Going with Windham to Carlton House, Burke

attacked him in the coach for a difference of opinion about the affairs of a friend, and behaved with such unreasonable passion and such furious rudeness of manner, that his magnanimous admirer had some difficulty in obliterating the impression. The public were less tolerant. Windham has told us that at this time Burke was a man decried, persecuted, and proscribed, not being much valued even by his own party, and by half the nation considered as little better than an ingenious madman.[4] This is evidence beyond impeachment, for Windham loved and honoured Burke with the affection and reverence of a son; and he puts the popular sentiment on record with grief and amazement. There is other testimony to the same effect. The late Lord Lansdowne, who must have heard the subject abundantly discussed by those who were most concerned in it, was once asked by a very eminent man of our own time, why the Whigs kept Burke out of their cabinets. "Burke!" he cried; "he was so violent, so overbearing, so arrogant, so intractable, that to have got on with him in a cabinet would have been utterly and absolutely impossible."

On the whole, it seems to be tolerably clear that the difficulties in the way of Burke's promotion to high office were his notoriously straitened circumstances; his ungoverned excesses of party zeal and political passion; finally, what Sir Gilbert Elliot calls the unjust prejudice and clamour against him and his family, and what Burke himself once called the hunt of obloquy that pursued him all his life. The first two of these causes can scarcely have operated in the arrangements that were made in the Rockingham and Coalition ministries. But the third, we may be sure, was incessantly at work. It would have needed

[4] Windham's *Diary*, p. 213.

social courage alike in 1782, 1783, and 1788 to give cabinet rank to a man round whose name there floated so many disparaging associations. Social courage is exactly the virtue in which the constructors of a government will always think themselves least able to indulge. Burke, we have to remember, did not stand alone before the world. Elliot describes a dinner party at Lord Fitzwilliam's, at which four of these half-discredited Irishmen were present. "Burke has now got such a tram after him as would sink anybody but himself:—his son, who is quite *nauseated* by all mankind; his brother, who is liked better than his son, but is rather offensive with animal spirits and with brogue; and his cousin, Will Burke, who is just returned unexpectedly from India, as much ruined as when he went many years ago, and who is a fresh charge on any prospects of power that Burke may ever have." It was this train, and the ideas of adventurership that clung to them, the inextinguishable stories about papistry and Saint Omer's, the tenacious calumny about the letters of Junius, the notorious circumstances of embarrassment and neediness—it was all these things which combined with Burke's own defects of temper and discretion, to give the Whig grandees as decent a reason as they could have desired for keeping all the great posts of state in their own hands.

It seems difficult to deny that the questions of the Regency had caused the germs of a sort of dissatisfaction and strain in the relations between Fox and Burke. Their feelings to one another have been well compared to the mutual discontent between partners in unsuccessful play, where each suspects that it is the mistakes of the other that lost the game. Whether Burke felt conscious of the failures in discretion and temper, which were the real or pretended excuse for neglect, we cannot tell. There is one passage

that reveals a chagrin of this kind. A few days after the meeting between the Duke of Portland and Elliot, for the purpose of settling his place in the new ministry, Burke went down to Beaconsfield. In writing (January 24th, 1789) to invite Windham and Pelham to come to stay a night, with promise of a leg of mutton cooked by a dairy-maid who was not a bad hand at a pinch, he goes on to say that his health has received some small benefit from his journey to the country. "But this view to health, though far from unnecessary to me, was not the chief cause of my present retreat. I began to find that I was grown rather too anxious; and had begun to discover to myself and to others a solicitude relative to the present state of affairs, which, though their strange condition might well warrant it in others, is certainly less suitable to my time of life, in which all emotions are less allowed; and to which, most certainly, all human concerns ought in reason to become more indifferent, than to those who have work to do, and a good deal of day and of inexhausted strength to do it in." [5]

The King's unexpected restoration to health two or three weeks later, brought to nought all the hope and ambition of the Whigs, and confirmed Pitt in power for the rest of Burke's lifetime. But an event now came to pass in the world's history, which transformed Burke in an instant from a man decried, persecuted, proscribed, into an object of exultant adoration all over Europe.

[5] *Correspondence*, iii. 89.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

We have now come to the second of the two momentous changes in the world's affairs, in which Burke played an imposing and historic part. His attitude in the first of them, the struggle for American independence, commands almost without alloy the admiration and reverence of posterity. His attitude in the second of them, the great revolution in France, has raised controversies which can only be compared in heat and duration to the master controversies of theology. If the history of society were written as learned men write the history of the Christian faith and its churches, Burke would figure in the same strong prominence whether deplorable or glorious, as Arius and Athanasius, Augustine and Sabellius, Luther and Ignatius. If we ask how it is that now, nearly a century after the event, men are still discussing Burke's pamphlet on the Revolution as they are still discussing Bishop Butler's *Analogy*, the answer is that in one case as in the other the questions at issue are still unsettled, and that Burke offers in their highest and most comprehensive form all the considerations that belong to one side of the dispute. He was not of those, of whom Coleridge said that they proceeded with much solemnity to solve the riddle of the French Revolution by anecdotes. He suspended it in the same light

of great social ideas and wide principles, in which its authors and champions professed to represent it. Unhappily he advanced from criticism to practical exhortation, in our opinion the most mischievous and indefensible that has ever been pressed by any statesman on any nation. But the force of the criticism remains, its foresight remains, its commemoration of valuable elements of life which men were forgetting, its discernment of the limitations of things, its sense of the awful emergencies of the problem. When our grandchildren have made up their minds, once for all, as to the merits of the social transformation which dawned on Europe in 1789, then Burke's *Reflections* will become a mere literary antiquity, and not before.

From the very beginning Burke looked upon the proceedings in France with distrust. He had not a moment of enthusiasm or sympathy of which to repent. When the news reached England that the insurgents of Paris had stormed the Bastille, Fox exclaimed with exultation, how much it was the greatest event that had ever happened in the world, how much the best. Is it an infirmity to wish for an instant that some such phrase of generous hope had escaped from Burke; that he had for a day or an hour undergone that fine illusion which was lighted up in the spirits of men like Wordsworth and Coleridge? Those great poets, who were destined one day to preach even a wiser and a loftier conservatism than his own, have told us what they felt—

> When France in wrath her giant limbs upreared,
> And with that oath, which smote air, earth, and sea,
> Stamped her strong foot, and said she would be free.

Burke from the first espied the looming shadow of a catastrophe. In August he wrote to Lord Charlemont

that the events in France had something paradoxical and mysterious about them; that the outbreak of the old Parisian ferocity might be no more than a sudden explosion, but if it should happen to be *character* rather than accident, then the people would need a strong hand like that of their former masters to coerce them; that all depended upon the French having wise heads among them, and upon these wise heads, if such there were, acquiring an authority to match their wisdom. There is nothing here but a calm and sagacious suspense of judgment. It soon appeared that the old Parisian ferocity was still alive. In the events of October, 1789, when the mob of Paris marched out to Versailles and marched back again with the King and Queen in triumphal procession, Burke felt in his heart that the beginning of the end had come, and that the catastrophe was already at hand. In October he wrote a long letter to the French gentleman to whom he afterwards addressed the *Reflections*. "You hope, sir," he said, "that I think the French deserving of liberty. I certainly do. I certainly think that all men who desire it deserve it. We cannot forfeit our right to it, but by what forfeits our title to the privileges of our kind. The liberty I mean is *social* freedom. It is that state of things in which liberty is secured by equality of restraint. This kind of liberty is, indeed, but another name for justice. *Whenever a separation is made between liberty and justice, neither is in my opinion safe.*" The weightiest and most important of all political truths, and worth half the fine things that poets have sung about freedom—if it could only have been respected, how different the course of the Revolution! But the engineer who attempts to deal with the abysmal rush of the falls of Niagara, must put aside the tools that constructed the

Bridgewater Canal and the Chelsea Waterworks. Nobody recognised so early as Burke that France had really embarked among cataracts and boiling gulfs, and the pith of all his first criticisms, including the *Reflections*, was the proposition that to separate freedom from justice was nothing else than to steer the ship of state direct into the Maelstrom. It is impossible to deny that this was true. Unfortunately it was a truth which the wild spirits that were then abroad in the storm made of no avail.

Destiny aimed an evil stroke when Burke, whose whole soul was bound up in order, peace, and gently enlarged precedent, found himself face to face with the portentous man-devouring Sphinx. He, who could not endure that a few clergymen should be allowed to subscribe to the Bible instead of to the Articles, saw the ancient Church of Christendom prostrated, its possessions confiscated, its priests proscribed, and Christianity itself officially superseded. The economical reformer, who when his zeal was hottest declined to discharge a tide-waiter or a scullion in the royal kitchen who should have acquired the shadow of a vested interest in his post, beheld two great orders stripped of their privileges and deprived of much of their lands, though their possession had been sanctified by the express voice of the laws and the prescription of many centuries. He, who was full of apprehension and anger at the proposal to take away a member of Parliament from St. Michael's or Old Sarum, had to look on while the most august monarchy in Europe was overturned. The man who dreaded fanatics, hated atheists, despised political theorisers, and was driven wild at the notion of applying metaphysical rights and abstract doctrines to public affairs, suddenly beheld a whole kingdom given finally up to

fanatics, atheists, and theorisers, who talked of nothing but the rights of man, and deliberately set as wide a gulf as ruin and bloodshed could make between themselves and every incident or institution in the history of their land. The statesman who had once declared, and habitually proved, his preference for peace over even truth, who had all his life surrounded himself with a mental paradise of order and equilibrium, in a moment found himself confronted by the stupendous and awful spectre which a century of disorder had raised in its supreme hour. It could not have been difficult for any one who had studied Burke's character and career, to foretell all that now came to pass with him.

It was from an English, and not from a French point of view, that Burke was first drawn to write upon the Revolution. The 4th of November was the anniversary of the landing of the Prince of Orange, and the first act in the Revolution of 1688. The members of an association which called itself the Revolution Society, chiefly composed of Dissenters, but not without a mixture of Churchmen, including a few peers and a good many members of the House of Commons, met as usual to hear a sermon in commemoration of the glorious day. Dr. Price was the preacher, and both in the morning sermon, and in the speeches which followed in the festivities of the afternoon, the French were held up to the loudest admiration, as having carried the principles of our own Revolution to a loftier height, and having opened boundless hopes to mankind. By these harmless proceedings Burke's anger and scorn were aroused to a pitch which must seem to us, as it seemed to not a few of his contemporaries, singularly out of all proportion to its cause. Deeper things were doubtless in silent motion within him.

He set to work upon a denunciation of Price's doctrines, with a velocity that reminds us of Aristotle's comparison of anger to the over-hasty servant, who runs off with all speed before he has listened to half the message. This was the origin of the *Reflections*. The design grew as the writer went on. His imagination took fire; his memory quickened a throng of impressive associations; his excited vision revealed to him a band of vain, petulant upstarts persecuting the ministers of a sacred religion, insulting a virtuous and innocent sovereign, and covering with humiliation the august daughter of the Cæsars; his mind teemed with the sage maxims of the philosophy of things established, and the precepts of the gospel of order. Every courier that crossed the Channel supplied new material to his contempt and his alarm. He condemned the whole method and course of the French reforms. His judgment was in suspense no more. He no longer distrusted; he hated, despised, and began to dread.

Men soon began to whisper abroad that Burke thought ill of what was going on over the water. When it transpired that he was writing a pamphlet, the world of letters was stirred with the liveliest expectation. The name of the author, the importance of the subject, and the singularity of his opinions, so Mackintosh informs us, all inflamed the public curiosity. Soon after Parliament met for the session (1790), the army estimates were brought up. Fox criticised the increase of our forces, and incidentally hinted something in praise of the French army, which had shown that a man could be a soldier without ceasing to be a citizen. Some days afterwards the subject was revived, and Pitt, as well as Fox, avowed himself hopeful of the good effect of the Revolution upon the order and government of France. Burke followed in a very

different vein, openly proclaiming that dislike and fear of the Revolution which was to be the one ceaseless refrain of all that he spoke or wrote for the rest of his life. He deplored Fox's praise of the army for breaking their lawful allegiance, and then he proceeded with ominous words to the effect that, if any friend of his should concur in any measures which should tend to introduce such a democracy as that of France, he would abandon his best friends and join with his worst enemies to oppose either the means or the end. This has unanimously been pronounced one of the most brilliant and effective speeches that Burke ever made. Fox rose with distress on every feature, and made the often-quoted declaration of his debt to Burke :— "If all the political information I have learned from books, all which I have gained from science, and all which my knowledge of the world and its affairs has taught me, were put into one scale, and the improvement which I have derived from my right honourable friend's instruction and conversation were placed in the other, I should be at a loss to decide to which to give the preference. I have learnt more from my right honourable friend, than from all the men with whom I ever conversed." All seemed likely to end in a spirit of conciliation, until Sheridan rose, and in the plainest terms that he could find, expressed his dissent from everything that Burke had said. Burke immediately renounced his friendship. For the first time in his life he found the sympathy of the House vehemently on his side.

In the following month (March, 1790) this unpromising incident was succeeded by an aberration which no rational man will now undertake to defend. Fox brought forward a motion for the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts. He did this in accordance with a recent sug-

gestion of Burke's own, that he should strengthen his political position by winning the support of the Dissenters. Burke himself had always denounced the Test Act as bad, and as an abuse of sacred things. To the amazement of everybody, and to the infinite scandal of his party, he now pronounced the Dissenters to be disaffected citizens, and refused to relieve them. Well might Fox say that Burke's words had filled him with grief and shame.

Meanwhile the great rhetorical fabric gradually arose. Burke revised, erased, moderated, strengthened, emphasized, wrote and re-wrote with indefatigable industry. With the manuscript constantly under his eyes, he lingered busily, pen in hand, over paragraphs and phrases, antitheses and apophthegms. The *Reflections* was no superb improvisation. Its composition recalls Palma Giovine's account of the mighty Titian's way of working; how the master made his preparations with resolute strokes of a heavily-laden brush, and then turned his picture to the wall, and by-and-by resumed again, and then again and again, redressing, adjusting, modelling the light with a rub of his finger, or dabbing a spot of dark colour into some corner with a touch of his thumb, and finally working all his smirches, contrasts, abruptnesses, into the glorious harmony that we know. Burke was so unwearied in this insatiable correction and alteration, that the printer found it necessary, instead of making the changes marked upon the proof sheets, to set up the whole in type afresh. The work was upon the easel for exactly a year. It was November (1790) before the result came into the hands of the public. It was a small octavo of three hundred and fifty-six pages, in contents rather less than twice the present volume, bound in an unlettered wrapper of grey paper, and sold for five shillings. In less than twelve months it reached

its eleventh edition, and it has been computed that not many short of thirty thousand copies were sold within the next six years.

The first curiosity had languished in the course of the long delay, but it was revived in its strongest force when the book itself appeared. A remarkable effect instantly followed. Before the *Reflections* was published, the predominant sentiment in England had been one of mixed astonishment and sympathy. Pitt had expressed this common mood both in the House of Commons and in private. It was impossible for England not to be amazed at the uprising of a nation whom they had been accustomed to think of as willing slaves, and it was impossible for her, when the scene did not happen to be the American colonies or Ireland, not to profess good wishes for the cause of emancipation all over the world. Apart from the natural admiration of a free people for a neighbour struggling to be free, England saw no reason to lament a blow to a sovereign and a government who had interfered on the side of her insurgent colonies. To this easy state of mind Burke's book put an immediate end. At once, as contemporaries assure us, it divided the nation into two parties. On both sides it precipitated opinion. With a long-resounding blast on his golden trumpet Burke had unfurled a new flag, and half the nation hurried to rally to it—that half which had scouted his views on America, which had bitterly disliked his plan of Economic Reform, which had mocked his ideas on religious toleration, and which a moment before had hated and reviled him beyond all men living, for his fierce tenacity in the impeachment of Warren Hastings. The King said to everybody who came near him that the book was a good book, a very good book, and every gentleman ought to read it. The

universities began to think of offering the scarlet gown of their most honourable degree to the assailant of Price and the Dissenters. The great army of the indolent good, the people who lead excellent lives and never use their reason, took violent alarm. The timorous, the weak-minded, the bigoted, were suddenly awakened to a sense of what they owed to themselves. Burke gave them the key which enabled them to interpret the Revolution in harmony with their usual ideas and their temperament.

Reaction quickly rose to a high pitch. One preacher in a parish church in the neighbourhood of London celebrated the anniversary of the Restoration of King Charles II. by a sermon, in which the pains of eternal damnation were confidently promised to political disaffection. Romilly, mentioning to a friend that the *Reflections* had got into a fourteenth edition, wondered whether Burke was not rather ashamed of his success. It is when we come to the rank and file of reaction, that we find it hard to forgive the man of genius who made himself the organ of their selfishness, their timidity, and their blindness. We know, alas, that the parts of his writings on French affairs to which they would fly, were not likely to be the parts which calm men now read with sympathy, but the scoldings, the screamings, the unworthy vituperation with which, especially in the latest of them, he attacked everybody who took part in the Revolution, from Condorcet and Lafayette down to Marat and Couthon. It was the feet of clay that they adored in their image, and not the head of fine gold and the breasts and the arms of silver.

On the continent of Europe the excitement was as great among the ruling classes as it was at home. Mirabeau, who had made Burke's acquaintance some years before in England, and even been his guest at Beaconsfield, now

made the *Reflections* the text of more than one tremendous philippic. Louis XVI. is said to have translated the book into French with his own hand. Catherine of Russia, Voltaire's adored Semiramis of the North, the benefactress of Diderot, the ready helper of the philosophic party, pressed her congratulations on the great pontiff of the old order, who now thundered anathema against the philosophers and all their works.

It is important to remember the stage which the Revolution had reached, when Burke was composing his attack upon it. The year 1790 was precisely the time when the hopes of the best men in France shone most brightly, and seemed most reasonable. There had been disorders, and Paris still had ferocity in her mien. But Robespierre was an obscure figure on the back benches of the Assembly. Nobody had ever heard of Danton. The name of Republic had never been so much as whispered. The King still believed that constitutional monarchy would leave him as much power as he desired. He had voluntarily gone to the National Assembly, and in simple language had exhorted them all to imitate his example by professing the single opinion, the single interest, the single wish—attachment to the new constitution, and ardent desire for the peace and happiness of France. The clergy, it is true, were violently irritated by the spoliation of their goods, and the nobles had crossed the Rhine, to brood impotently in the safety of Coblenz over projects of a bloody revenge upon their country. But France, meanwhile, paid little heed either to the anger of the clergy or the menaces of the emigrant nobles, and at the very moment when Burke was writing his most sombre pages, Paris and the provinces were celebrating with transports of joy and enthusiasm the civic

oath, the federation, the restoration of concord to the land, the final establishment of freedom and justice in a regenerated France. This was the happy scene over which Burke suddenly stretched out the right arm of an inspired prophet, pointing to the cloud of thunder and darkness that was gathering on the hills, and proclaiming to them the doom that had been written upon the wall by the fingers of an inexorable hand. It is no wonder that when the cloud burst and the doom was fulfilled, men turned to Burke, as they went of old to Ahithophel, whose counsel was as if a man had inquired of the oracle of God.

It is not to our purpose to discuss all the propositions advanced in the *Reflections*, much less to reply to them. The book is like some temple, by whose structure and design we allow ourselves to be impressed, without being careful to measure the precise truth or fitness of the worship to which it was consecrated by its first founders. Just as the student of the *Politics* of Aristotle may well accept all the wisdom of it, without caring to protest at every turn against slavery as the basis of a society, so we may well cherish all the wisdom of the *Reflections*, at this distance of time, without marking as a rubric on every page that half of these impressive formulæ and inspiring declamations were irrelevant to the occasion which called them forth, and exercised for the hour an influence that was purely mischievous. Time permits to us this profitable lenity. In reading this, the first of his invectives, it is important for the sake of clearness of judgment to put from our minds the practical policy which Burke afterwards so untiringly urged upon his countrymen. As yet there is no exhortation to England to interfere. We still listen to the voice of the states-

man, and are not deafened by the passionate cries of the preacher of a crusade. When Burke wrote the *Reflections*, he was justified in criticising the Revolution as an extraordinary movement, but still a movement professing to be conducted on the principles of rational and practicable politics. They were the principles to which competent onlookers like Jefferson and Morris had expected the Assembly to conform, but to which the Assembly never conformed for an instant. It was on the principles of rational politics that Fox and Sheridan admired it. On these principles Burke condemned it. He declared that the methods of the Constituent Assembly, up to the summer of 1790, were unjust, precipitate, destructive, and without stability. Men had chosen to build their house on the sands, and the winds and the seas would speedily beat against it and overthrow it.

His prophecy was fulfilled to the letter. What is still more important for the credit of his foresight is, that not only did his prophecy come true, but it came true for the reasons that he had fixed upon. It was, for instance, the constitution of the Church, in which Burke saw the worst of the many bad mistakes of the Assembly. History, now slowly shaking herself free from the passions of a century, agrees that the civil constitution of the clergy was the measure which, more than any other, decisively put an end to whatever hopes there might have been of a peaceful transition from the old order to the new. A still more striking piece of foresight is the prediction of the despotism of the Napoleonic Empire. Burke had compared the levelling policy of the Assembly in their geometrical division of the departments, and their isolation from one another of the bodies of the state, to the treatment which a conquered country receives at the hands

of its conquerors. Like Romans in Greece or Macedon, the French innovators had destroyed the bonds of union, under colour of providing for the independence of each of their cities. "If the present project of a Republic should fail," Burke said, with a prescience really profound, "all securities to a moderate freedom fail with it. All the indirect restraints which mitigate despotism are removed; insomuch that, if monarchy should ever again obtain an entire ascendancy in France under this or any other dynasty, it will probably be, if not voluntarily tempered at setting out by the wise and virtuous counsels of the prince, the most completely arbitrary power that ever appeared on earth." Almost at the same moment Mirabeau was secretly writing to the King, that their plan of reducing all citizens to a single class would have delighted Richelieu. This equal surface, he said, facilitates the exercise of power, and many reigns in an absolute government would not have done as much as this single year of revolution, for the royal authority. Time showed that Burke and Mirabeau were right.

History ratifies nearly all Burke's strictures on the levity and precipitancy of the first set of actors in the revolutionary drama. No part of the *Reflections* is more energetic than the denunciation of geometric and literary methods; and these are just what the modern explorer hits upon, as one of the fatal secrets of the catastrophe. De Tocqueville's chapter on the causes which made literary men the principal persons in France, and the effect which this had upon the Revolution (Bk. III. ch. i.), is only a little too cold to be able to pass for Burke's own. Quinet's work on the Revolution is one long sermon, full of eloquence and cogency, upon the incapacity and blindness of the men who undertook the conduct of a tremendous

crisis upon mere literary methods, without the moral courage to obey the logic of their beliefs, with the student's ignorance of the eager passion and rapid imagination of multitudes of men, with the pedant's misappreciation of a people, of whom it has been said by one of themselves, that there never was a nation more led by its sensations, and less by its principles. Comte, again, points impressively to the Revolution as the period which illustrates more decisively than another, the peril of confounding the two great functions of speculation and political action: and he speaks with just reprobation of the preposterous idea in the philosophic politicians of the epoch, that society was at their disposal, independent of its past development, devoid of inherent impulses, and easily capable of being morally regenerated by the mere modification of legislative rules.

What then was it that, in the midst of so much perspicacity as to detail, blinded Burke at the time when he wrote the *Reflections*, to the true nature of the movement? Is it not this, that he judges the Revolution as the solution of a merely political question? If the Revolution had been merely political, his judgment would have been adequate. The question was much deeper. It was a social question that burned under the surface of what seemed no more than a modification of external arrangements. That Burke was alive to the existence of social problems, and that he was even tormented by them, we know from an incidental passage in the *Reflections*. There he tells us how often he had reflected, and never reflected without feeling, upon the innumerable servile and degrading occupations to which by the social economy so many wretches are inevitably doomed. He had pondered whether there could be any means of rescuing these

unhappy people from their miserable industry, without disturbing the natural course of things, and impeding the great wheel of circulation which is turned by their labour. This is the vein of that striking passage in his first composition, which I have already quoted (p. 16). Burke did not yet see, and probably never saw, that one key to the events which astonished and exasperated him, was simply that the persons most urgently concerned had taken the riddle which perplexed him, into their own hands, and had in fiery earnest set about their own deliverance. The pith of the Revolution, up to 1790, was less the political constitution, of which Burke says so much and so much that is true, than the social and economic transformation, of which he says so little. It was not a question of the power of the King, or the measure of an electoral circumscription, that made the Revolution; it was the iniquitous distribution of the taxes, the scourge of the militia service, the scourge of the road service, the destructive tyranny exercised in the vast preserves of wild game, the vexatious rights and imposts of the lords of manors, and all the other odious burdens and heavy impediments on the prosperity of the thrifty and industrious part of the nation. If he had seen ever so clearly that one of the most important sides of the Revolution in progress was the rescue of the tiller of the soil, Burke would still doubtless have viewed events with bitter suspicion. For the process could not be executed without disturbing the natural course of things, and without violating his principle that all changes should find us with our minds tenacious of justice and tender of property. A closer examination than he chose to give, of the current administration alike of justice and of property under the old system, would have explained to him that

an hour had come in which the spirit of property and of justice compelled a supersession of the letter.

If Burke had insisted on rigidly keeping sensibility to the wrongs of the French people out of the discussion, on the ground that the whole subject was one for positive knowledge and logical inference, his position would have been intelligible and defensible. He followed no such course. His pleading turns constantly to arguments from feeling; but it is always to feeling on one side, and to a sensibility that is only alive to the consecrated force of historic associations. How much pure and uncontrolled emotion had to do with what ought to have been the reasoned judgments of his understanding, we know on his own evidence. He had sent the proof-sheets of a part of his book to Sir Philip Francis. They contained the famous passage describing the French Queen as he had seen her seventeen years before at Versailles. Francis bluntly wrote to him that, in his opinion, all Burke's eloquence about Marie Antoinette was no better than pure foppery, and he referred to the Queen herself as no better than Messalina. Burke was so excited by this, that his son, in a rather officious letter, begged Francis not to repeat such stimulating remonstrance. What is interesting in the incident is Burke's own reply. He knew nothing, he said, of the story of Messalina, and declined the obligation of proving judicially the virtues of all those whom he saw suffering wrong and contumely, before he endeavoured to interest others in their sufferings, and before endeavouring to kindle horror against midnight assassins at backstairs and their more wicked abettors in pulpits. And then he went on, "I tell you again that the recollection of the manner in which I saw the Queen of France in the year 1774 [1773], and the con-

trast between that brilliancy, splendour, and beauty, with the prostrate homage of a nation to her, and the abominable scene of 1789 which I was describing, *did* draw tears from me and wetted my paper. These tears came again into my eyes almost as often as I looked at the description—they may again."

The answer was obvious. It was well to pity the unmerited agonies of Marie Antoinette, though as yet, we must remember, she had suffered nothing beyond the indignities of the days of October at Versailles. But did not the protracted agonies of a nation deserve the tribute of a tear? As Paine asked, were men to weep over the plumage, and forget the dying bird? The bulk of the people must labour, Burke told them, "to obtain what by labour can be obtained; and when they find, as they commonly do, the success disproportioned to the endeavour, they must be taught their consolation in the final proportions of eternal justice." When we learn that a Lyons silk weaver, working as hard as he could for over seventeen hours a day, could not earn money enough to procure the most bare and urgent necessaries of subsistence, we may know with what benignity of brow eternal justice must have presented herself in the garret of that hapless wretch. It was no idle abstraction, no metaphysical right of man for which the French cried, but only the practical right of being permitted, by their own toil, to save themselves and the little ones about their knees from hunger and cruel death. The *mainmortable* serfs of ecclesiastics are variously said to have been a million and a million and a half at the time of the Revolution. Burke's horror, as he thought of the priests and prelates who left palaces and dignities to earn a scanty living by the drudgery of teaching their language in

strange lands, should have been alleviated by the thought that a million or more of men were rescued from ghastly material misery. Are we to be so overwhelmed with sorrow over the pitiful destiny of the men of exalted rank and sacred function, as to have no tears for the forty thousand serfs in the gorges of the Jura, who were held in dead-hand by the Bishop of Saint-Claude?

The simple truth is that Burke did not know enough of the subject about which he was writing. When he said, for instance, that the French before 1789 possessed all the elements of a constitution that might be made nearly as good as could be wished, he said what many of his contemporaries knew, and what all subsequent investigation and meditation have proved, to be recklessly ill-considered and untrue. As to the social state of France, his information was still worse. He saw the dangers and disorders of the new system, but he saw a very little way indeed into the more cruel dangers and disorders of the old. Mackintosh replied to the *Reflections* with manliness and temperance in the *Vindiciæ Gallicæ*. Thomas Paine replied to them with an energy, courage, and eloquence worthy of his cause, in the *Rights of Man*. But the substantial and decisive reply to Burke came from his former correspondent, the farmer at Bradfield in Suffolk. Arthur Young published his *Travels in France* some eighteen months after the *Reflections* (1792), and the pages of the twenty-first chapter in which he closes his performance, as a luminous criticism of the most important side of the Revolution, are worth a hundred times more than Burke, Mackintosh, and Paine all put together. Young afterwards became panic-stricken, but his book remained. There the writer plainly enumerates without trope or invective the intolerable burdens under which

the great mass of the French people had for long years been groaning. It was the removal of these burdens that made the very heart's core of the Revolution, and gave to France that new life which so soon astonished and terrified Europe. Yet Burke seems profoundly unconscious of the whole of them. He even boldly asserts that, when the several orders met in their bailliages in 1789, to choose their representatives and draw up their grievances and instructions, in no one of these instructions did they charge, or even hint at, any of those things which had drawn upon the usurping Assembly the detestation of the rational part of mankind. He could not have made a more enormous blunder. There was not a single great change made by the Assembly, which had not been demanded in the lists of grievances that had been sent up by the nation to Versailles. The division of the kingdom into districts, and the proportioning of the representation to taxes and population; the suppression of the intendants; the suppression of all monks and the sale of their goods and estates; the abolition of feudal rights, duties and services; the alienation of the King's domains; the demolition of the Bastille; these and all else were in the prayers of half the petitions that the country had laid at the feet of the King.

If this were merely an incidental blunder in a fact, it might be of no importance. But it was a blunder which went to the very root of the discussion. The fact that France was now at the back of the Assembly, inspiring its counsels and ratifying its decrees, was the cardinal element, and that is the fact which at this stage Burke systematically ignored. That he should have so ignored it, left him in a curious position, for it left him without any rational explanation of the sources of the policy which

kindled his indignation and contempt. A publicist can never be sure of his position, until he can explain to himself even what he does not wish to justify to others. Burke thought it enough to dwell upon the immense number of lawyers in the Assembly, and to show that lawyers are naturally bad statesmen. He did not look the state of things steadily in the face. It was no easy thing to do, but Burke was a man who ought to have done it. He set all down to the ignorance, folly, and wickedness of the French leaders. This was as shallow as the way in which his enemies, the philosophers, used to set down the superstition of eighteen centuries to the craft of priests, and all defects in the government of Europe to the cruelty of tyrants. How it came about that priests and tyrants acquired their irresistible power over men's minds, they never inquired. And Burke never inquired into the enthusiastic acquiescence of the nation, and, what was most remarkable of all, the acquiescence of the army, in the strong measures of the Assembly. Burke was in truth so appalled by the magnitude of the enterprise on which France had embarked, that he utterly forgot for once the necessity in political affairs, of seriously understanding the originating conditions of things. He was strangely content with the explanations that came from the malignants at Coblenz, and he actually told Francis that he charged the disorders not on the mob, but on the Duke of of Orleans and Mirabeau, on Barnave and Bailly, on Lameth and Lafayette, who had spent immense sums of money, and used innumerable arts, to stir up the populace throughout France to the commission of the enormities that were shocking the conscience of Europe. His imagination broke loose. His practical reason was

mastered by something that was deeper in him than reason.

This brings me to remark a really singular trait. In spite of the predominance of practical sagacity, of the habits and spirit of public business, of vigorous actuality in Burke's character, yet at the bottom of all his thoughts about communities and governments there lay a certain mysticism. It was no irony, no literary trope, when he talked of our having taught the American husbandman "piously to believe in the mysterious virtue of wax and parchment." He was using no idle epithet, when he described the disposition of a stupendous wisdom, "moulding together the great mysterious incorporation of the human race." To him there actually was an element of mystery in the cohesion of men in societies, in political obedience, in the sanctity of contract; in all that fabric of law and charter and obligation, whether written or unwritten, which is the sheltering bulwark between civilization and barbarism. When reason and history had contributed all that they could to the explanation, it seemed to him as if the vital force, the secret of organization, the binding framework, must still come from the impenetrable regions beyond reasoning and beyond history. There was another great conservative writer of that age, whose genius was aroused into a protest against the revolutionary spirit, as vehement as Burke's. This was Joseph de Maistre, one of the most learned, witty, and acute of all reactionary philosophers. De Maistre wrote a book on the Generative Principle of Political Constitutions. He could only find this principle in the operation of occult and supernatural forces, producing the half-divine legislators who figure mysteriously in the early history of nations. Hence he held, and with astonishing ingenuity enforced, the doctrine that nothing

else could deliver Europe from the Satanic forces of revolution—he used the word Satanic in all literal seriousness—save the divinely inspired supremacy of the Pope. No natural operations seemed at all adequate either to produce or to maintain the marvel of a coherent society. We are reminded of a professor who, in the fantastic days of geology, explained the Pyramids of Egypt to be the remains of a volcanic eruption, which had forced its way upwards by a slow and stately motion; the hieroglyphs were crystalline formations; and the shaft of the great Pyramid was the air-hole of a volcano. De Maistre preferred a similar explanation of the monstrous structures of modern society. The hand of man could never have reared, and could never uphold them. If we cannot say that Burke laboured in constant travail with the same perplexity, it is at least true that he was keenly alive to it, and that one of the reasons why he dreaded to see a finger laid upon a single stone of a single political edifice, was his consciousness that he saw no answer to the perpetual enigma how any of these edifices had ever been built, and how the passion, violence, and waywardness of the natural man had ever been persuaded to bow their necks to the strong yoke of a common social discipline. Never was mysticism more unseasonable; never was an hour when men needed more carefully to remember Burke's own wise practical precept, when he was talking about the British rule in India, that we must throw a sacred veil over the beginnings of government. Many woes might perhaps have been saved to Europe, if Burke had applied this maxim to the government of the new France.

Much has always been said about the inconsistency between Burke's enmity to the Revolution and his enmity to

Lord North in one set of circumstances, and to Warren Hastings in another. The pamphleteers of the day made selections from the speeches and tracts of his happier time, and the seeming contrast had its effect. More candid opponents admitted then, as all competent persons admit now, that the inconsistency was merely verbal and superficial. Watson, the Bishop of Llandaff, was only one of many who observed very early that this was the unmistakable temper of Burke's mind. "I admired, as everybody did," he said, "the talents, but not the principles of Mr. Burke; his opposition to the Clerical Petition [for relaxation of subscription, 1772], first excited my suspicion of his being a High Churchman in religion, and a Tory, perhaps an aristocratic Tory, in the state." Burke had indeed never been anything else than a conservative. He was like Falkland, who had bitterly assailed Strafford and Finch on the same principles on which, after the outbreak of the civil war, he consented to be secretary of state to King Charles. Coleridge is borne out by a hundred passages, when he says that in Burke's writings at the beginning of the American Revolution and in those at the beginning of the French Revolution, the principles are the same and the deductions are the same; the practical inferences are almost opposite in the one case from those drawn in the other, yet in both equally legitimate. It would be better to say that they would have been equally legitimate, if Burke had been as right in his facts, and as ample in his knowledge in the case of France, as he was in the case of America. We feel, indeed, that partly from want of this knowledge, he has gone too far from some of the wise maxims of an earlier time. What has become of the doctrine that all great public collections of men—he was then speaking of the House of Commons—"possess

a marked love of virtue and an abhorrence of vice."[1] Why was the French Assembly not to have the benefit of this admirable generalisation? What has become of all those sayings about the presumption, in all disputes between nations and rulers, "being at least upon a par in favour of the people;" and a populace never rebelling from passion for attack, but from impatience of suffering? And where is now that strong dictum, in the letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol, that "general rebellions and revolts of a whole people never were *encouraged*, now or at any time; they are always *provoked*"?

When all these things have been noted, to hold a man to his formulæ without reference to their special application, is pure pedantry. Burke was the last man to lay down any political proposition not subject to the ever varying interpretation of circumstances, and independently of the particular use which was to be made of it. Nothing universal, he had always said, can be rationally affirmed on any moral or political subject. The lines of morality, again, are never ideal lines of mathematics, but are broad and deep as well as long, admitting of exceptions, and demanding modifications. "These exceptions and modifications are made, not by the process of logic, but by the rules of prudence. Prudence is not only first in rank of the virtues, political and moral, but she is the director, the regulator, the standard of them all. As no moral questions are ever abstract questions, this, before I judge upon any abstract proposition, must be embodied in circumstances; for, since things are right and wrong, morally speaking, only by their relation and connection with other things, this very question of what it is politi-

[1] *American Taxation.*

cally right to grant, depends upon its relation to its effects." "Circumstances," he says, never weary of laying down his great notion of political method, "give, in reality, to every political principle its distinguishing colour and discriminating effect. The circumstances are what render every civil and political scheme beneficial or obnoxious to mankind."

This is at once the weapon with which he would have defended his own consistency, and attacked the absolute proceedings in France. He changed his front, but he never changed his ground. He was not more passionate against the proscription in France, than he had been against the suspension of Habeas Corpus in the American war. "I flatter myself," he said in the *Reflections*, "that I love a manly, moral, regulated liberty." Ten years before he had said, "The liberty, the only liberty I mean, is a liberty connected with order." The court tried to regulate liberty too severely. It found in him an inflexible opponent. Demagogues tried to remove the regulations of liberty. They encountered in him the bitterest and most unceasing of all remonstrants. The arbitrary majority in the House of Commons forgot for whose benefit they held power, from whom they derived their authority, and in what description of government it was that they had a place. Burke was the most valiant and strenuous champion in the ranks of the independent minority. He withstood to the face the King and the King's friends. He withstood to the face Charles Fox and the Friends of the People. He may have been wrong in both, or in either, but it is unreasonable to tell us that he turned back in his course; that he was a revolutionist in 1770, and a reactionist in 1790; that he was in his sane mind when he opposed the supremacy of the Court, but

that his reason was tottering when he opposed the supremacy of the Faubourg Saint Antoine.

There is no part of Burke's career at which we may not find evidence of his instinctive and undying repugnance to the critical or revolutionary spirit and all its works. From the early days when he had parodied Bolingbroke, down to the later time when he denounced Condorcet as a fanatical atheist, with "every disposition to the lowest as well as the highest and most determined villanies," he invariably suspected or denounced everybody, virtuous or vicious, high-minded or ignoble, who inquired with too keen a scrutiny into the foundations of morals, of religion, of social order. To examine with a curious or unfavourable eye the bases of established opinions, was to show a leaning to anarchy, to atheism, or to unbridled libertinism. Already we have seen how, three years after the publication of his *Thoughts on the Present Discontents*, and seventeen years before the composition of the *Reflections*, he denounced the philosophers with a fervour and a vehemence which he never afterwards surpassed. When a few of the clergy petitioned to be relieved from some of the severities of subscription, he had resisted them on the bold ground that the truth of a proposition deserves less attention, than the effect of adherence to it upon the established order of things. "I will not enter into the question," he told the House of Commons, "how much truth is preferable to peace. Perhaps truth may be far better. But as we have scarcely ever the same certainty in the one that we have in the other, I would, unless the truth were evident indeed, hold fast to peace." In that intellectual restlessness, to which the world is so deeply indebted, Burke could recognize but scanty merit. Himself the most industrious and active-minded of men, he

was ever sober in cutting the channels of his activity, and he would have had others equally moderate. Perceiving that plain and righteous conduct is the end of life in this world, he prayed men not to be over-curious in searching for, and handling, and again handling, the theoretic base on which the prerogatives of virtue repose. Provided that there was peace, that is to say, so much of fair happiness and content as is compatible with the conditions of the human lot, Burke felt that a too great inquisitiveness as to its foundations was not only idle but cruel.

If the world continues to read the *Reflections*, and reads it with a new admiration that is not diminished by the fact that on the special issue its tendency is every day more clearly discerned to have been misleading, we may be sure that it is not for the sake of such things as the precise character of the Revolution of 1688, where, for that matter, constitutional writers have shown abundantly that Burke was nearly as much in the wrong as Dr. Sacheverell. Nor has the book lived merely by its gorgeous rhetoric and high emotions, though these have been contributing elements. It lives because it contains a sentiment, a method, a set of informal principles, which, awakened into new life after the Revolution, rapidly transformed the current ways of thinking and feeling about all the most serious objects of our attention, and have powerfully helped to give a richer substance to all modern literature. In the *Reflections* we have the first great sign that the ideas on government and philosophy which Locke had been the chief agent in setting into European circulation, and which had carried all triumphantly before them throughout the century, did not comprehend the whole truth nor the deepest truth about human character—the

relations of men and the union of men in society. It has often been said that the armoury from which the French philosophers of the eighteenth century borrowed their weapons, was furnished from England, and it may be added as truly that the reaction against that whole scheme of thought came from England. In one sense we may call the *Reflections* a political pamphlet, but it is much more than this, just as the movement against which it was levelled was much more than a political movement. The Revolution rested on a philosophy, and Burke confronted it with an antagonistic philosophy. Those are but superficial readers who fail to see at how many points Burke, while seeming only to deal with the French monarchy and the British constitution, with Dr. Price and Marie Antoinette, was in fact, and exactly because he dealt with them in the comprehensive spirit of true philosophy, turning men's minds to an attitude from which not only the political incidents of the hour, but the current ideas about religion, psychology, the very nature of human knowledge, would all be seen in a changed light and clothed in new colour. All really profound speculation about society comes in time to touch the heart of every other object of speculation, not by directly contributing new truths or directly corroborating old ones, but by setting men to consider the consequences to life of different opinions on these abstract subjects, and their relations to the great paramount interests of society, however those interests may happen at the time to be conceived. Burke's book marks a turning point in literary history, because it was the signal for that reaction over the whole field of thought, into which the Revolution drove many of the finest minds of the next generation, by showing the supposed consequences of pure individualistic rationalism.

We need not attempt to work out the details of this extension of a political reaction into a universal reaction in philosophy and poetry. Any one may easily think out for himself what consequences in act and thought, as well as in government, would be likely to flow, for example, from one of the most permanently admirable sides of Burke's teaching—his respect for the collective reason of men, and his sense of the impossibility in politics and morals of considering the individual apart from the experience of the race. "We are afraid," he says, "to put men to live and trade each on his own private stock of reason, because we suspect that this stock in each man is small, and that the individuals would do better to avail themselves of the general bank and capital of nations and of ages. *Many of our men of speculation, instead of exploding general prejudices, employ their sagacity to discover the latent wisdom which prevails in them.* If they find what they seek, and they seldom fail, they think it more wise to continue the prejudice with the reason involved, than to cast away the coat of prejudice, and to leave nothing but the naked reason: because prejudice with its reason has a motive to give action to that reason, and an affection which will give it permanence. Prejudice is of ready application in the emergency; it previously engages the mind in a steady course of wisdom and virtue, and does not leave the man hesitating in the moment of decision, sceptical, puzzled, and unresolved. Prejudice renders a man's virtue his habit, and not a series of unconnected acts. Through just prejudice, his duty becomes a part of his nature." Is not this to say, in other words, that in every man the substantial foundations of action consist of the accumulated layers which various generations of ancestors have placed for him; that the greater part of

our sentiments act most effectively when they act most mechanically, and by the methods of an unquestioned system; that although no rule of conduct or spring of action ought to endure, which does not repose in sound reason, yet this naked reason is in itself a less effective means of influencing action, than when it exists as one part of a fabric of ancient and endeared association? Interpreted by a mobile genius, and expanded by a poetic imagination, all this became the foundation from which the philosophy of Coleridge started, and, as Mill has shown in a famous essay, Coleridge was the great apostle of the conservative spirit in England in its best form.

Though Burke here, no doubt, found a true base for the philosophy of order, yet perhaps Condorcet or Barnave might have justly asked him whether, when we thus realize the strong and immovable foundations which are laid in our character before we are born, there could be any occasion, as a matter of fact, for that vehement alarm which moved Burke lest a few lawyers, by a score of parchment decrees, should overthrow the venerated sentiments of Europe about justice and about property? Should he not have known better than most men the force of the self-protecting elements of society?

This is not a convenient place for discussing the issues between the school of order and the school of progress. It is enough to have marked Burke's position in one of them. The *Reflections* places him among the great Conservatives of history. Perhaps the only Englishman with whom in this respect he may be compared, is Sir Thomas More, that virtuous and eloquent reactionist of the sixteenth century. More abounded in light, in intellectual interests, in single-minded care for the common weal. He was as anxious as any man of his time for the improved

ordering of the Church, but he could not endure that reformation should be bought at the price of breaking up the ancient spiritual unity of Europe. He was willing to slay and be slain rather than he would tolerate the destruction of the old faith, or assent to the violence of the new statecraft. He viewed Thomas Cromwell's policy of reformation, just as Burke viewed Mirabeau's policy of revolution. Burke too, we may be very sure, would as willingly have sent Mirabeau and Bailly to prison or the block as More sent Phillips to the Tower and Bainham to the stake. For neither More nor Burke was of the gentle contemplative spirit, which the first disorder of a new society just bursting into life merely overshadows with saddening regrets and poetic gloom. The old harmony was to them so bound up with the purpose and meaning of life, that to wage active battle for the gods of their reverence was the irresistible instinct of self-preservation. More had an excuse which Burke had not, for the principle of persecution was accepted by the best minds of the sixteenth century, but by the best minds of the eighteenth it was emphatically repudiated.

Another illustrious name of Burke's own era rises to our lips, as we ponder mentally the too scanty list of those who have essayed the great and hardy task of reconciling order with progress. Turgot is even a more imposing figure than Burke himself. The impression made upon us by the pair is indeed very different, for Turgot was austere, reserved, distant, a man of many silences and much suspense; while Burke, as we know, was imaginative, exuberant, unrestrained, and, like some of the greatest actors on the stage of human affairs, he had associated his own personality with the prevalence of right ideas and good influences. In Turgot, on the other hand, we dis-

cern something of the isolation, the sternness, the disdainful melancholy of Tacitus. He even rises out of the eager, bustling, shrill-tongued crowd of the Voltairean age with some of that austere moral indignation and haughty astonishment, with which Dante had watched the stubborn ways of men centuries before. On one side Turgot shared the conservatism of Burke, though, perhaps, he would hardly have given it that name. He habitually corrected the headlong insistence of the revolutionary philosophers, his friends, by reminding them that neither pity, nor benevolence, nor hope can ever dispense with justice; and he could never endure to hear of great changes being wrought at the cost of this sovereign quality. Like Burke, he held fast to the doctrine that everything must be done for the multitude, but nothing by them. Like Burke, he realized how close are the links that bind the successive generations of men, and make up the long chain of human history. Like Burke, he never believed that the human mind has any spontaneous inclination to welcome pure truth. Here, however, is visible between them a hard line of division. It is not error, said Turgot, which opposes the progress of truth; it is indolence, obstinacy, and the spirit of routine. But then Turgot enjoined upon us to make it the aim of life to do battle in ourselves and others with all this indolence, obstinacy, and spirit of routine in the world; while Burke, on the contrary, gave to these bad things gentler names, he surrounded them with the picturesque associations of the past, and in the great world-crisis of his time he threw all his passion and all his genius on their side. Will any reader doubt which of these two types of the school of order and justice, both of them noble, is the more valuable for the race, and the worthier and more stimulating ideal for the individual?

It is not certain that Burke was not sometimes for a moment startled by the suspicion that he might unawares be fighting against the truth. In the midst of flaming and bitter pages, we now and again feel a cool breath from the distant region of a half-pensive tolerance. "I do not think," he says at the close of the *Reflections*, to the person to whom they were addressed, "that my sentiments are likely to alter yours. I do not know that they ought. You are young; you cannot guide, but must follow, the fortune of your country. But hereafter they may be of some use to you, in some future form which your commonwealth may take. In the present it can hardly remain; but before its final settlement, it may be obliged to pass, as one of our poets says, 'through great varieties of untried being,' and in all its transmigrations to be purified by fire and blood."

He felt in the midst of his hate that what he took for seething chaos, might after all be the struggle upwards of the germs of order. Among the later words that he wrote on the Revolution were these:—"If a great change is to be made in human affairs, the minds of men will be fitted to it; the general opinions and feelings will draw that way. Every fear, every hope will forward it; and then they who persist in opposing this mighty current in human affairs, will appear rather to resist the decrees of Providence itself, than the mere designs of men." We can only regret that these rays of the *mens divinior* did not shine with a more steadfast light; and that a spirit which, amid the sharp press of manifold cares and distractions, had ever vibrated with lofty sympathies, was not now more constant to its faith in the beneficent powers and processes of the Unseen Time.

CHAPTER IX.

BURKE AND HIS PARTY—PROGRESS OF THE REVOLUTION—IRELAND—LAST YEARS.

For some months after the publication of the *Reflections*, Burke kept up the relations of an armed peace with his old political friends. The impeachment went on, and in December (1790) there was a private meeting on the business connected with it, between Pitt, Burke, Fox, and Dundas, at the house of the Speaker. It was described by one who knew, as most snug and amiable, and there seems to have been a general impression in the world at this moment, that Fox might by some means be induced to join Pitt. What troubled the slumbers of good Whigs like Gilbert Elliot, was the prospect of Fox committing himself too strongly on French affairs. Burke himself was in the deepest dejection at the prospect; for Fox did not cease to express the most unqualified disapproval of the *Reflections*; he thought that, even in point of composition, it was the worst thing that Burke had ever published. It was already feared that his friendship for Sheridan was drawing him further away from Burke, with whom Sheridan had quarrelled, into a course of politics that would both damage his own reputation, and break up the strong union of which the Duke of Portland was the nominal head.

New floods in France had not yet carried back the ship of state into raging waters. Pitt was thinking so little of danger from that country, that he had plunged into a policy of intervention in the affairs of eastern Europe. When writers charge Burke with breaking violently in upon Pitt's system of peace abroad and reform at home, they overlook the fact that before Burke had begun to preach his crusade against the Jacobins, Pitt had already prepared a war with Russia. The nation refused to follow. They agreed with Fox that it was no concern of theirs whether or not Russia took from Turkey the country between the Boug and Dniester; they felt that British interests would be more damaged by the expenses of a war, than by the acquisition by Russia of Ockzakow. Pitt was obliged to throw up the scheme, and to extricate himself as well as he could from rash engagements with Prussia. It was on account of his services to the cause of peace on this occasion, that Catherine ordered the Russian ambassador to send her a bust of Fox in white marble, to be placed in her colonnade between Demosthenes and Cicero. We may take it for granted that after the Revolution rose to its full height, the bust of Fox accompanied that of Voltaire down to the cellar of the Hermitage.

While the affair of the Russian armament was still occupying the minister, an event of signal importance happened in the ranks of his political adversaries. The alliance which had lasted between Burke and Fox for five and twenty years, came to a sudden end, and this rift gradually widened into a destructive breach throughout the party. There is no parallel in our parliamentary history to the fatal scene. In Ireland, indeed, only eight years before, Flood and Grattan, after fighting side by

side for many years, had all at once sprung upon one another in the Parliament House with the fury of vultures: Flood had screamed to Grattan that he was a mendicant patriot, and Grattan had called Flood an ill-omened bird of night, with a sepulchral note, a cadaverous aspect, and a broken beak. The Irish, like the French, have the art of making things dramatic, and Burke was the greatest of Irishmen. On the opening of the session of 1791, the government had introduced a bill for the better government of Canada. It introduced questions about church establishments and hereditary legislators. In discussing these, Fox made some references to France. It was impossible to refer to France without touching the *Reflections on the French Revolution*. Burke was not present, but he heard what Fox had said, and before long Fox again introduced French affairs in a debate on the Russian armament. Burke rose in violent heat of mind to reply, but the House would not hear him. He resolved to speak when the time came for the Canada Bill to be recommitted. Meanwhile some of his friends did all that they could to dissuade him from pressing the matter further. Even the Prince of Wales is said to have written him a letter. There were many signs of the rupture that was so soon to come in the Whig ranks. Men so equally devoted to the common cause as Windham and Elliot nearly came to a quarrel at a dinner-party at Lord Malmesbury's, on the subject of Burke's design to speak; and Windham, who for the present sided with Fox, enters in his diary that he was glad to escape from the room without speaking to the man whom, since the death of Doctor Johnson, he revered before all other men besides.

On the day appointed for the Canada Bill, Fox called

at Burke's house, and after some talk on Burke's intention to speak, and on other matters, they walked down to Westminster and entered the House together, as they had so many a time done before but were never to do again. They found that the debate had been adjourned, and it was not until May 6th that Burke had an opportunity of explaining himself on the Revolution in France. He had no sooner risen, than interruptions broke out from his own side, and a scene of great disorder followed. Burke was incensed beyond endurance by this treatment, for even Fox and Windham had taken part in the tumult against him. With much bitterness he commented on Fox's previous eulogies of the Revolution, and finally there came the fatal words of severance. "It is indiscreet," he said, "at any period, but especially at my time of life, to provoke enemies, or give my friends occasion to desert me. Yet if my firm and steady adherence to the British Constitution place me in such a dilemma, I am ready to risk it, and with my last words to exclaim, 'Fly from the French Constitution.'" Fox at this point eagerly called to him that there was no loss of friends. "Yes, yes," cried Burke, "there is a loss of friends. I know the price of my conduct. I have done my duty at the price of my friend. Our friendship is at an end."

The members who sat on the same side were aghast at proceedings which went beyond their worst apprehensions. Even the ministerialists were shocked. Pitt agreed much more with Fox than with Burke, but he would have been more than human if he had not watched with complacency his two most formidable adversaries turning their swords against one another. Wilberforce, who was more disinterested, lamented the spectacle as shameful. In the galleries there was hardly a dry eye. Fox, as might have

been expected from his warm and generous nature, was deeply moved, and is described as weeping even to sobbing. He repeated his former acknowledgment of his debt to Burke, and he repeated his former expression of faith in the blessings which the abolition of royal despotism would bring to France. With unabated vehemence Burke again rose to denounce the French Constitution,—"a building composed of untempered mortar—the work of Goths and Vandals, where everything was disjointed and inverted." After a short rejoinder from Fox, the scene came to a close, and the once friendly intercourse between the two heroes was at an end. When they met in the Managers' box in Westminster Hall on the business of Hastings's trial, they met with the formalities of strangers. There is a story that when Burke left the House on the night of the quarrel it was raining, and Mr. Curwen, a member of the Opposition, took him home in his carriage. Burke at once began to declaim against the French. Curwen dropped some remark on the other side. "What!" Burke cried out, grasping the check-string, "are you one of these people! Set me down!" It needed all Curwen's force to keep him where he was; and when they reached his house, Burke stepped out without saying a single word.

We may agree that all this did not indicate the perfect sobriety and self-control proper to a statesman, in what was a serious crisis both to his party and to Europe. It was about this time that Burke said to Addington, who was then Speaker of the House of Commons, that he was not well. "I eat too much, Speaker," he said, "I drink too much, and I sleep too little." It is even said that he felt the final breach with Fox as a relief from unendurable suspense; and he quoted the lines about Æneas, after he had finally resolved

to quit Dido and the Carthaginian shore, at last being able to snatch slumber in his ship's tall stern. There can be no doubt how severe had been the tension. Yet the performance to which Burke now applied himself, is one of the gravest and most reasonable of all his compositions. He felt it necessary to vindicate the fundamental consistency between his present and his past. We have no difficulty in imagining the abuse to which he was exposed from those whose abuse gave him pain. In a country governed by party, a politician who quits the allies of a lifetime, must expect to pay the penalty. The Whig papers told him that he was expected to surrender his seat in Parliament. They imputed to him all sorts of sinister motives. His name was introduced into ironical toasts. For a whole year there was scarcely a member of his former party who did not stand aloof from him. Windham, when the feeling was at its height, sent word to a host that he would rather not meet Burke at dinner. Dr. Parr, though he thought Mr. Burke the greatest man upon earth, declared himself most indignantly and most fixedly on the side of Mr. Sheridan and Mr. Fox. The Duke of Portland, though always described as strongly and fondly attached to him, and Gilbert Elliot, who thought that Burke was right in his views on the Revolution, and right in expressing them, still could not forgive the open catastrophe, and for many months all the old habits of intimacy among them were entirely broken off.

Burke did not bend to the storm. He went down to Margate, and there finished the *Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs*. Meanwhile he dispatched his son to Coblenz to give advice to the royalist exiles, who were then mainly in the hands of Calonne, one of the very worst of the ministers whom Louis XVI. had tried be-

tween his dismissal of Turgot in 1774, and the meeting of the States-General in 1789. This measure was taken at the request of Calonne, who had visited Burke at Margate. The English government did not disapprove of it, though they naturally declined to invest either young Burke or any one else with authority from themselves. As little came of the mission as might have been expected from the frivolous, unmanly, and enraged spirit of those to whom it was addressed.

In August (1791), while Richard Burke was at Coblenz, the *Appeal* was published. This was the last piece that Burke wrote on the Revolution, in which there is any pretence of measure, sobriety, and calm judgment in face of a formidable and perplexing crisis. Henceforth it is not political philosophy, but the minatory exhortation of a prophet. We deal no longer with principles and ideas, but with a partisan denunciation of particular acts, and a partisan incitement to a given practical policy. We may appreciate the policy as we choose, but our appreciation of Burke as a thinker and a contributor to political wisdom is at an end. He is now only Demosthenes thundering against Philip, or Cicero shrieking against Mark Antony.

The *Reflections* had not been published many months, before Burke wrote the *Letter to a Member of the National Assembly* (January, 1791), in which strong disapproval had grown into furious hatred. It contains the elaborate diatribe against Rousseau, the grave panegyric on Cromwell for choosing Hale to be Chief Justice, and a sound criticism on the laxity and want of foresight in the manner in which the States-General had been convened. Here first Burke advanced to the position that it might be the duty of other nations to interfere to restore the King to his rightful authority, just as England and Prussia had interfered to

save Holland from confusion, as they had interfered to preserve the hereditary constitution in the Austrian Netherlands, and as Prussia had interfered to snatch even the malignant and the turban'd Turk from the pounce of the Russian eagle. Was not the King of France as much an object of policy and compassion, as the Grand Seignior? As this was the first piece in which Burke hinted at a crusade, so it was the first in which he began to heap upon the heads, not of Hébert, Fouquier-Tinville, Billaud, nor even of Robespierre or Danton—for none of these had yet been heard of—but of able and conscientious men in the Constituent Assembly, language of a virulence which Fox once said seriously that Burke had picked, even to the phrases of it, out of the writings of Salmasius against Milton, but which is really only to be paralleled by the much worse language of Milton against Salmasius. It was in truth exactly the kind of incensed speech which, at a later date, the factions in Paris levelled against one another, when Girondins screamed for the heads of Jacobins, and Robespierre denounced Danton, and Tallien cried for the blood of Robespierre.

Burke declined most wisely to suggest any plan for the National Assembly. "Permit me to say,"—this is in the letter of January, 1791, to a member of the Assembly,—"that if I were as confident as I ought to be diffident in my own loose general ideas, I never should venture to broach them, if but at twenty leagues' distance from the centre of your affairs. I must see with my own eyes; I must in a manner touch with my own hands, not only the fixed, but momentary circumstances, before I could venture to suggest any political project whatsoever. I must know the power and disposition to accept, to execute, to persevere. I must see all the aids and all the obstacles. I must see

the means of correcting the plan, where correctives would be wanted. I must see the things: I must see the men. Without a concurrence and adaptation of these to the design, the very best speculative projects might become not only useless but mischievous. Plans must be made for men. People at a distance must judge ill of men. They do not always answer to their reputation when you approach them. Nay, the perspective varies, and shows them quite other than you thought them. At a distance, if we judge uncertainly of men, we must judge worse of *opportunities*, which continually vary their shapes and colours, and pass away like clouds." Our admiration at such words is quickly stifled when we recall the confident, unsparing, immoderate criticism which both preceded and followed this truly rational exposition of the danger of advising, in cases where we know neither the men nor the opportunities. Why was savage and unfaltering denunciation any less unbecoming than, as he admits, crude prescriptions would have been unbecoming?

By the end of 1791, when he wrote the *Thoughts on French Affairs*, he had penetrated still further into the essential character of the Revolution. Any notion of a reform to be effected after the decorous pattern of 1688, so conspicuous in the first great manifesto, had wholly disappeared. The changes in France he allowed to bear little resemblance or analogy to any of those which had been previously brought about in Europe. It is a revolution, he said, of doctrine and theoretic dogma. The Reformation was the last revolution of this sort which had happened in Europe; and he immediately goes on to remark a point of striking resemblance between them. The effect of the Reformation was "to introduce other interests into all countries than those which arose from

their locality and natural circumstances." In like manner other sources of faction were now opened, combining parties among the inhabitants of different countries into a single connection. From these sources, effects were likely to arise fully as important as those which had formerly arisen from the jarring interests of the religious sects. It is a species of faction which "breaks the locality of public affections."[1]

He was thus launched on the full tide of his policy. The French Revolution must be hemmed in by a cordon of fire. Those who sympathised with it in England must be gagged, and if gagging did not suffice, they must be taught respect for the constitution in dungeons and on the gallows. His cry for war abroad and harsh coercion at home waxed louder every day. As Fox said, it was lucky that Burke took the royal side in the Revolution, for his violence would certainly have got him hanged if he had happened to take the other side.

It was in the early summer of 1792 that Miss Burney again met Burke at Mrs. Crewe's villa at Hampstead. He entered into an animated conversation on Lord Macartney and the Chinese expedition, reviving all the old enthusiasm of his companion by his allusions and anecdotes, his brilliant fancies and wide information. When politics were introduced, he spoke with an eager-

[1] De Tocqueville has unconsciously imitated Burke's very phrases. "Toutes les révolutions civiles et politiques ont eu une patrie, et s'y sont enfermées. La Révolution française . . . on l'a vue rapprocher ou diviser les hommes en dépit des lois, des traditions, des caractères, de langue, rendant parfois ennemis des compatriotes, et frères des étrangers; *ou plutôt elle a formé au-dessus de toutes les nationalités particulières, une patrie intellectuelle commune dont les hommes de toutes les nations ont pu devenir citoyens.*"—Ancien Régime, p. 15.

ness and a vehemence that instantly banished the graces, though it redoubled the energies of his discourse. "How I wish," Miss Burney writes, "that you could meet this wonderful man when he is easy, happy, and with people he cordially likes. But politics, even on his own side, must always be excluded; his irritability is so terrible on that theme, that it gives immediately to his face *the expression of a man who is going to defend himself from murderers.*"

Burke still remained without a following, but the ranks of his old allies gradually began to show signs of wavering. His panic about the Jacobins within the gates slowly spread. His old faith, about which he had once talked so much, in the ancient rustic, manly, home-bred sense of the English people, he dismissed as if it had been some idle dream that had come to him through the ivory gate. His fine comparison of the nation to a majestic herd, browsing in peace amid the importunate chirrupings of a thousand crickets, became so little appropriate, that he was now beside himself with apprehension that the crickets were about to rend the oxen in pieces. Even then, the herd stood tranquilly in their pastures, only occasionally turning a dull eye, now to France, and now to Burke. In the autumn of 1791, Burke dined with Pitt and Lord Grenville, and he found them resolute for an honest neutrality in the affairs of France, and "quite out of all apprehensions of any effect from the French Revolution in this kingdom, either at present or any time to come." Francis and Sheridan, it is true, spoke as if they almost wished for a domestic convulsion; and cool observers who saw him daily, even accused Sheridan of wishing to stir up the lower ranks of the people by the hope of plundering their betters. But men who afterwards became alarmists,

are found, so late as the spring of 1792, declaring in their most confidential correspondence that the party of confusion made no way with the country, and produced no effect. Horne Tooke was its most conspicuous chief, and nobody pretended to fear the subversion of the realm by Horne Tooke. Yet Burke, in letters where he admits that the democratic party is entirely discountenanced, and that the Jacobin faction in England is under a heavy cloud, was so possessed by the spectre of panic, as to declare that the Duke of Brunswick was as much fighting the battle of the crown of England, as the Duke of Cumberland fought that battle at Culloden.

Time and events, meanwhile, had been powerfully telling for Burke. While he was writing his *Appeal*, the French King and Queen had destroyed whatever confidence sanguine dreamers might have had in their loyalty to the new order of things, by attempting to escape over the frontier. They were brought back, and a manful attempt was made to get the new constitution to work, in the winter of 1791–92. It was soon found out that Mirabeau had been right, when he said that for a monarchy it was too democratic, and for a republic there was a king too much. This was Burke's *Reflections* in a nutshell. But it was foreign intervention that finally ruined the King, and destroyed the hope of an orderly issue. Frederick the Great had set the first example of what some call iniquity and violence in Europe, and others in milder terms call a readjustment of the equilibrium of nations. He had taken Silesia from the house of Austria, and he had shared in the first partition of Poland. Catherine II. had followed him at the expense of Poland, Sweden, and Turkey. However we may view these transactions, and whether we describe them by the stern words of the moralist, or the more deprecatory

words of the diplomatist, they are the first sources of that storm of lawless rapine which swept over every part of Europe for five-and-twenty years to come. The intervention of Austria and Prussia in the affairs of France was originally less a deliberate design for the benefit of the old order, than an interlude in the intrigues of eastern Europe. But the first effect of intervention on behalf of the French monarchy was to bring it in a few weeks to the ground.

In the spring of 1792 France replied to the preparations of Austria and Prussia for invasion, by a declaration of war. It was inevitable that the French people should associate the court with the foreign enemy that was coming to its deliverance. Everybody knew as well then as we know it now, that the Queen was as bitterly incensed against the new order of things, and as resolutely unfaithful to it, as the most furious emigrant on the Rhine. Even Burke himself, writing to his son at Coblenz, was constrained to talk about Marie Antoinette as that "most unfortunate woman, who was not to be cured of the spirit of court intrigue even by a prison." The King may have been loyally resigned to his position, but resignation will not defend a country from the invader; and the nation distrusted a chief who only a few months before had been arrested in full flight to join the national enemy. Power naturally fell into the hands of the men of conviction, energy, passion, and resource. Patriotism and republicanism became synonymous, and the constitution against which Burke had prophesied, was henceforth a dead letter. The spirit of insurrection that had slumbered since the fall of the Bastille and the march to Versailles in 1789, now awoke in formidable violence, and after the preliminary rehearsal of what is known in the revolutionary calendar as the 20th of June (1792),

the people of Paris responded to the Duke of Brunswick's insensate manifesto by the more memorable day of the 10th of August. Brunswick, accepting the hateful language which the French emigrants put into his mouth, had declared that every member of the national guard taken with arms in his hands would be immediately put to death; that every inhabitant who should dare to defend himself, would be put to death and his house burnt to the ground; and that if the least insult was offered to the royal family, then their Austrian and Prussian majesties would deliver Paris to military execution and total destruction. This is the vindictive ferocity which only civil war can kindle. To convince men that the manifesto was not an empty threat, on the day of its publication a force of nearly 140,000 Austrians, Prussians, and Hessians entered France. The sections of Paris replied by marching to the Tuileries, and after a furious conflict with the Swiss guards, they stormed the chateau. The King and his family had fled to the National Assembly. The same evening they were thrown into prison, whence the King and Queen only came out on their way to the scaffold.

It was the King's execution in January, 1793, that finally raised feeling in England to the intense heat which Burke had for so long been craving. The evening on which the courier brought the news was never forgotten by those who were in London at the time. The playhouses were instantly closed, and the audiences insisted on retiring with half the amusement for which they had paid. People of the lowest and the highest rank alike put on mourning. The French were universally denounced as fiends upon earth. It was hardly safe for a Frenchman to appear in the streets of London. Placards were posted

on every wall, calling for war, and the crowds who gathered round them, read them with loud hurrahs.

It would be a great mistake to say that Pitt ever lost his head, but he lost his feet. The momentary passion of the nation forced him out of the pacific path in which he would have chosen to stay. Burke had become the greatest power in the country, and was in closer communication with the ministers than any one out of office. He went once about this time with Windham and Elliot, to inform Pitt as to the uneasiness of the public about the slackness of our naval and military preparation. "Burke," says one of the party, "gave Pitt a little political instruction in a very respectful and cordial way, but with the authority of an old and most informed statesman, and although nobody ever takes the whole of Burke's advice, yet he often, or always rather, furnishes very important and useful matter, some part of which sticks and does good. Pitt took it all very patiently and cordially."

It was in the December of 1792 that Burke had enacted that famous bit of melodrama out of place, known as the Dagger Scene. The government had brought in an Alien Bill, imposing certain pains and restrictions on foreigners coming to this country. Fox denounced it as a concession to foolish alarms, and was followed by Burke, who began to storm as usual against murderous atheists. Then without due preparation he began to fumble in his bosom, suddenly drew out a dagger, and with an extravagant gesture, threw it on the floor of the House, crying that this was what they had to expect from their alliance with France. The stroke missed its mark, and there was a general inclination to titter, until Burke, collecting him-

self for an effort, called upon them with a vehemence to which his listeners could not choose but respond, to keep French principles from their heads, and French daggers from their hearts; to preserve all their blandishments in life, and all their consolations in death; all the blessings of time, and all the hopes of eternity. All this was not prepared long beforehand, for it seems that the dagger had only been shown to Burke on his way to the House, as one that had been sent to Birmingham to be a pattern for a large order. Whether prepared or unprepared, the scene was one from which we gladly avert our eyes.

Negotiations had been going on for some months, and they continued in various stages for some months longer, for a coalition between the two great parties of the state. Burke was persistently anxious that Fox should join Pitt's government. Pitt always admitted the importance of Fox's abilities in the difficult affairs which lay before the ministry, and declared that he had no sort of personal animosity to Fox, but rather a personal good-will and good-liking. Fox himself said of a coalition, "It is so damned right, to be sure, that I cannot help thinking it must be." But the difficulties were insuperable. The more rapidly the government drifted in Burke's direction, the more impossible was it for a man of Fox's political sympathies and convictions to have any dealings with a cabinet committed to a policy of irrational panic, to be carried out by a costly war abroad and cruel repression at home. "*What a very wretched man!*" was Burke's angry exclamation one day, when it became certain that Fox meant to stand by the old flag of freedom and generous common sense.

When the coalition at length took place (1794), the only man who carried Burke's principles to their fullest

extent into Pitt's cabinet, was Windham. It is impossible not to feel the attraction of Windham's character, his amiability, his reverence for great and virtuous men, his passion for knowledge, the versatility of his interests. He is a striking example of the fact that literature was a common pursuit and occupation to the chief statesmen of that time (always excepting Pitt), to an extent that has been gradually tending to become rarer. Windham, in the midst of his devotion to public affairs, to the business of his country, and, let us add, a zealous attendance on every prize fight within reach, was never happy unless he was working up points in literature and mathematics. There was a literary and classical spirit abroad, and in spite of the furious preoccupations of faction, a certain ready disengagement of mind prevailed. If Windham and Fox began to talk of horses, they seemed to fall naturally into what had been said about horses by the old writers. Fox held that long ears were a merit, and Windham met him by the authority of Xenophon and Oppian in favour of short ones, and finally they went off into what it was that Virgil meant, when he called a horse's head *argutum caput*. Burke and Windham travelled in Scotland together in 1785, and their conversation fell as often on old books, as on Hastings or on Pitt. They discussed Virgil's similes; Johnson and L'Estrange, as the extremes of English style; what Stephens and A. Gellius had to say about Cicero's use of the word *gratiosus*. If they came to libraries, Windham ran into them with eagerness, and very strongly enjoyed all "the *feel* that a library usually excites." He is constantly reproaching himself with a remissness, which was purely imaginary, in keeping up his mathematics, his Greek tragedies, his Latin historians. There is no more curious example of the remorse of a bookman impeded by affairs. "What

progress might men make in the several parts of knowledge," he says very truly, in one of these moods, "if they could only pursue them with the same eagerness and assiduity as are exerted by lawyers in the conduct of a suit." But this distraction between the tastes of the bookman and the pursuits of public business, united with a certain quality of his constitution to produce one great defect in his character, and it was the worst defect that a statesman can have. He became the most irresolute and vacillating of men. He wastes the first half of a day in deciding which of two courses to take, and the second half in blaming himself for not having taken the other. He is constantly late at entertainments, because he cannot make up his mind in proper time whether to go or to stay at home; hesitation whether he shall read in the red room or in the library, loses him three of the best hours of a morning; the difficulty of early rising he finds to consist less in rising early, than in satisfying himself that the practice is wholesome; his mind is torn for a whole forenoon in an absurd contest with himself, whether he ought to indulge a strong wish to exercise his horse before dinner. Every page of his diary is a register of the symptoms of this unhappy disease. When the Revolution came, he was absolutely forced by the iron necessity of the case, after certain perturbations, to go either with Fox or with Burke. Under this compulsion he took one headlong plunge into the policy of alarm. Everybody knows how desperately an habitually irresolute man is capable of clinging to a policy or a conviction, to which he has once been driven by dire stress of circumstance. Windham having at last made up his mind to be frightened by the Revolution, was more violently and inconsolably frightened than anybody else.

Pitt, after he had been forced into war, at least intended it to be a war on the good old-fashioned principles of seizing the enemy's colonies and keeping them. He was taunted by the alarmists with caring only for sugar islands, and making himself master of all the islands in the world except Great Britain and Ireland. To Burke all this was an abomination, and Windham followed Burke to the letter. He even declared the holy rage of the *Third Letter on a Regicide Peace*, published after Burke's death, to contain the purest wisdom and the most unanswerable policy. It was through Windham's eloquence and perseverance that the monstrous idea of a crusade, and all Burke's other violent and excited precepts, gained an effective place and hearing in the cabinet, in the royal closet, and in the House of Commons, long after Burke himself had left the scene.

We have already seen how important an element Irish affairs became in the war with America. The same spirit which had been stirred by the American war, was inevitably kindled in Ireland by the French Revolution. The association of United Irishmen now came into existence, with aims avowedly revolutionary. They joined the party which was striving for the relief of the Catholics from certain disabilities, and for their admission to the franchise. Burke had watched all movements in his native country, from the Whiteboy insurrection of 1761 downwards, with steady vigilance, and he watched the new movement of 1792 with the keenest eyes. It made him profoundly uneasy. He could not endure the thought of ever so momentary and indirect an association with a revolutionary party, either in Ireland or any other quarter of the globe, yet he was eager for a policy which should reconcile the Irish. He was so for two reasons. One of

them was his political sense of the inexpediency of proscribing men by whole nations, and excluding from the franchise on the ground of religion a people as numerous as the subjects of the King of Denmark or the King of Sardinia, equal to the population of the United Netherlands, and larger than were to be found in all the States of Switzerland. His second reason was his sense of the urgency of facing trouble abroad with a nation united and contented at home; of abolishing in the heart of the country that "bank of discontent, every hour accumulating, upon which every description of seditious men may draw at pleasure."

In the beginning of 1792, Burke's son went to Dublin as the agent and adviser of the Catholic Committee, who at first listened to him with the respect due to one in whom they expected to meet the qualities of his father. They soon found out that he was utterly without either tact or judgment; that he was arrogant, impertinent, vain, and empty. Wolfe Tone declared him to be by far the most impudent and opinionative fellow that he had ever known in his life. Nothing could exceed the absurdity of his conduct, and on one occasion he had a very narrow escape of being taken into custody by the Serjeant-at-arms, for rushing down from the gallery into the Irish House of Commons, and attempting to make a speech in defence of a petition which he had drawn up, and which was being attacked by a member in his place. Richard Burke went home, it is said, with two thousand guineas in his pocket, which the Catholics had cheerfully paid as the price of getting rid of him. He returned shortly after, but only helped to plunge the business into further confusion, and finally left the scene covered with odium and discredit. His father's *Letter to Sir Hercules*

Langrishe (1792) remains an admirable monument of wise statesmanship, a singular interlude of calm and solid reasoning in the midst of a fiery whirlwind of intense passion. Burke perhaps felt that the state of Ireland was passing away from the sphere of calm and solid reason, when he knew that Dumouriez's victory over the allies at Valmy, which filled Beaconsfield with such gloom and dismay, was celebrated at Dublin by an illumination.

Burke, who was now in his sixty-fourth year, had for some time announced his intention of leaving the House of Commons, as soon as he had brought to an end the prosecution of Hastings. In 1794 the trial came to a close; the thanks of the House were formally voted to the managers of the impeachment; and when the scene was over, Burke applied for the Chiltern Hundreds. Lord Fitzwilliam nominated Richard Burke for the seat which his father had thus vacated at Malton. Pitt was then making arrangements for the accession of the Portland Whigs to his government, and it was natural, in connexion with these arrangements, to confer some favour on the man who had done more than anybody else to promote the new alliance. It was proposed to make Burke a peer under the style of Lord Beaconsfield,—a title in a later age whimsically borrowed for himself by a man of genius with a delight in irony. To the title it was proposed to attach a yearly income for two or more lives. But the bolt of destiny was at this instant launched. Richard Burke, the adored centre of all his father's hopes and affections, was seized with illness, and died (August, 1794). We cannot look without tragic emotion on the pathos of the scene, which left the remnant of the old man's days desolate and void. A Roman poet has described in touching words the woe of the aged

Nestor, as he beheld the funeral pile of his son, too untimely slain,—

> "Oro parumper
> Attendas quantum de legibus ipse queratur
> Fatorum et nimio de stamine, quum videt acris
> Antilochi barbam ardentem: quum quærit ab omni
> Quisquis adest socius, cur hæc in tempora duret,
> Quod facinus dignum tam longo admiserit ævo."

Burke's grief finds a nobler expression. "The storm has gone over me, and I lie like one of those old oaks which the late hurricane has scattered about me. I am stripped of all my honours; I am torn up by the roots and lie prostrate on the earth. . . I am alone. I have none to meet my enemies in the gate. . . I live in an inverted order. They who ought to have succeeded me, have gone before me. They who should have been to me as posterity, are in the place of ancestors."

Burke only lived three years after this desolating blow. The arrangements for a peerage, as a matter of course, came to an end. But Pitt was well aware of the serious embarrassments by which Burke was so pressed that he saw actual beggary very close at hand. The King, too,—who had once, by the way, granted a pension to Burke's detested Rousseau, though Rousseau was too proud to draw it—seems to have been honourably interested in making a provision for Burke. What Pitt offered was an immediate grant of 1200*l.* a year from the Civil List for Mrs. Burke's life, to be followed by a proposition to Parliament in a message from the king, to confer an annuity of greater value upon a statesman who had served the country to his own loss for thirty years. As a matter of fact, the grant, 2500*l.* a year in amount, much to Burke's chagrin, was never brought before Parliament, but was conferred directly

by the Crown, as a charge on the four and a half per cent. fund for two or more lives. It seems as if Pitt were afraid of challenging the opinion of Parliament; and the storm which the pension raised out of doors, was a measure of the trouble which the defence of it would have inflicted on the government inside the House of Commons. According to the rumour of the time, Burke sold two of his pensions upon lives for 27,000*l.*, and there was left the third pension of twelve hundred pounds. By-and-by, when the resentment of the Opposition was roused to the highest pitch by the infamous Treason and Sedition Bills of 1795, the Duke of Bedford and Lord Lauderdale, seeking to accumulate every possible complaint against the government, assailed the grant to Burke, as made without the consent of Parliament, and as a violent contradiction to the whole policy of the plan for economic reform. The attack, if not unjustifiable in itself, came from an unlucky quarter. A chief of the house of Bedford was the most unfit person in the world to protest against grants by favour of the Crown. Burke was too practised a rhetorician not to see the opening, and his *Letter to a Noble Lord* is the most splendid repartee in the English language.

It is not surprising that Burke's defence should have provoked rejoinder. A cloud of pamphlets followed the *Letter to a Noble Lord*—some in doggrel verse, others in a magniloquent prose imitated from his own, others mere poisonous scurrility. The nearest approach to a just stroke that I can find, after turning over a pile of this trash, is an expression of wonder that he, who was inconsolable for the loss of a beloved son, should not have reflected how many tender parents had been made childless in the profusion of blood, of which he himself had been the

most relentless champion. Our disgust at the pages of insult which were here levelled at a great man, is perhaps moderated by the thought that Burke himself, who of all people ought to have known better, had held up to public scorn and obloquy men of such virtue, attainments, and real service to mankind, as Richard Price and Joseph Priestley.

It was during these months that he composed the *Letters on a Regicide Peace*, though the third and fourth of them were not published until after his death. There have been those to whom these compositions appeared to be Burke's masterpieces. In fact they are deplorable. They contain passages of fine philosophy and of skilful and plausible reasoning, but such passages only make us wonder how they come to be where they are. The reader is in no humour for them. In splendour of rhetoric, in fine images, in sustention, in irony, they surpass anything that Burke ever wrote, but of the qualities and principles that, far more than his rhetoric, have made Burke so admirable and so great—of justice, of firm grasp of fact, of a reasonable sense of the probabilities of things—there are only traces enough to light up the gulfs of empty words, reckless phrases, and senseless vituperations, that surge and boil around them.

It is with the same emotion of "grief and shame" with which Fox heard Burke argue against relief to Dissenters, that we hear him abusing the courts of law because they did not convict Hardy and Horne Tooke. The pages against divorce and civil marriage, even granting that they point to the right judgment in these matters, express it with a vehemence that is irrational, and in the dialect, not of a statesman, but of an enraged Capucin. The highly wrought passage in which Burke describes external aggran-

disement as the original thought and the ultimate aim of the earlier statesmen of the Revolution, is no better than ingenious nonsense. The whole performance rests on a gross and inexcusable anachronism. There is a contemptuous refusal to discriminate between groups of men who were as different from one another as Oliver Cromwell was different from James Nayler, and between periods which were as unlike in all their conditions as the Athens of the Thirty Tyrants was unlike Athens after Thrasybulus had driven the Tyrants out. He assumes that the men, the policy, the maxims of the French government are the men, the policy, and the maxims of the handful of obscure miscreants who had hacked priests and nobles to pieces at the doors of the prisons four years before. Carnot is to him merely "that sanguinary tyrant," and the heroic Hoche becomes "that old practised assassin," while the Prince of Wales, by the way, and the Duke of York are the hope and pride of nations. To heap up that incessant iteration about thieves, murderers, housebreakers, assassins, bandits, bravoes with their hands dripping with blood and their maw gorged with property, desperate paramours, bombastical players, the refuse and rejected offal of strolling theatres, bloody buffoons, bloody felons—all this was as unjust to hundreds of disinterested, honest, and patriotic men who were then earnestly striving to restore a true order and solid citizenship in France, as the foul-mouthed scurrility of an Irish Orangeman is unjust to millions of devout Catholics.

Burke was the man who might have been expected before all others to know that in every system of government, whatever may have been the crimes of its origin, there is sure, by the bare necessity of things, to rise up a party or an individual, whom their political instinct will force

into resistance to the fatalities of anarchy. Man is too strongly a political animal for it to be otherwise. It was so at each period and division in the Revolution. There was always a party of order, and by 1795, when Burke penned these reckless philippics, order was only too easy in France. The Revolution had worn out the passion and moral enthusiasm of its first years, and all the best men of the revolutionary time had been consumed in a flame of fire. When Burke talked about this war being wholly unlike any war that ever was waged in Europe before, about its being a war for justice on the one side, and a fanatical bloody propagandism on the other, he shut his eyes to the plain fact that the Directory had after all really sunk to the moral level of Frederick and Catherine, or for that matter, of Louis the Fourteenth himself. This war was only too like the other great wars of European history. The French government had become political, exactly in the same sense in which Thugut and Metternich and Herzberg were political. The French Republic in 1797 was neither more nor less aggressive, immoral, piratical, than the monarchies which had partitioned Poland, and had intended to redistribute the continent of Europe to suit their own ambitions. The Coalition began the game, but France proved too strong for them, and they had the worst of their game. Jacobinism may have inspired the original fire which made her armies irresistible, but Jacobinism of that stamp had now gone out of fashion, and to denounce a peace with the Directory because the origin of their government was regicidal, was as childish as it would have been in Mazarin to decline a treaty of regicide peace with the Lord Protector.

What makes the *Regicide Peace* so repulsive is not that

it recommends energetic prosecution of the war, and not that it abounds in glaring fallacies in detail, but that it is in direct contradiction with that strong, positive, rational, and sane method which had before uniformly marked Burke's political philosophy. Here lay his inconsistency, not in abandoning democratic principles, for he had never held them, but in forgetting his own rules, that nations act from adequate motives relative to their interests, and not from metaphysical speculation; that we cannot draw an indictment against a whole people; that there is a species of hostile justice which no asperity of war wholly extinguishes in the minds of a civilized people. "Steady independent minds," he had once said, "when they have an object of so serious a concern to mankind as *government* under their contemplation, will disdain to assume the part of satirists and declaimers." Show the thing that you ask for, he cried during the American war, to be reason, show it to be common sense. We have a measure of the reason and common sense of Burke's attitude in the *Regicide Peace*, in the language which it inspired in Windham and others, who denounced Wilberforce for canting when he spoke of peace; who stigmatized Pitt as weak and a pander to national avarice for thinking of the cost of the war; and who actually charged the liverymen of London who petitioned for peace, with open sedition.

It is a striking illustration of the versatility of Burke's moods, that immediately before sitting down to write the *Fourth Letter on a Regicide Peace*, he had composed one of the most lucid and accurately meditated of all of his tracts, which, short as it is, contains ideas on free trade which was only too far in advance of the opinion of his time. In 1772 a Corn Bill had been introduced—it was passed in the following year—of which

Adam Smith said, that it was like the laws of Solon, not the best in itself, but the best which the situation and tendency of the times would admit. In speaking upon this measure, Burke had laid down those sensible principles on the trade in corn, which he now in 1795 worked out in the *Thoughts and Details on Scarcity*. Those who do not concern themselves with economics will perhaps be interested in the singular passage, vigorously objected to by Dugald Stewart, in which Burke sets up a genial defence of the consumption of ardent spirits. It is interesting as an argument, and it is most characteristic of the author.

The curtain was now falling. All who saw him, felt that Burke's life was quickly drawing to a close. His son's death had struck the final blow. We could only wish that the years had brought to him, what it ought to be the fervent prayer of us all to find at the close of the long struggle with ourselves and with circumstance,—a disposition to happiness, a composed spirit to which time has made things clear, an unrebellious temper, and hopes undimmed for mankind. If this was not so, Burke at least busied himself to the end in great interests. His charity to the unfortunate emigrants from France was diligent and unwearied. Among other solid services, he established a school near Beaconsfield for sixty French boys, principally the orphans of Quiberon, and the children of other emigrants who had suffered in the cause. Almost the last glimpse that we have of Burke, is in a record of a visit to Beaconsfield by the author of the *Vindiciæ Gallicæ*. Mackintosh had written to Burke, to express his admiration for his character and genius, and recanting his old defence of the Revolution. "Since that time," he said, "a melancholy experience has undeceived me on many subjects, in which I was then the dupe of my enthusiasm."

When Mackintosh went to Beaconsfield (Christmas, 1796), he was as much amazed as every one else with the exuberance of his host's mind in conversation. Even then Burke entered with cordial glee into the sports of children, rolling about with them on the carpet, and pouring out in his gambols the sublimest images, mixed with the most wretched puns. He said of Fox, with a deep sigh, "He is made to be loved." There was the irresistible outbreak against "that putrid carcase, that mother of all evil—the French Revolution." It reminded him of the accursed things that crawled in and out of the mouth of the vile hag in Spenser's Cave of Error; and he repeated the nauseous stanza. Mackintosh was to be the faithful knight of the romance, the brightness of whose sword was to flash destruction on the filthy progeny.

It was on the 9th of July, 1797, that in the sixty-eighth year of his age, preserving his faculties to the last moment, he expired. With magnanimous tenderness, Fox proposed that he should be buried among the great dead in Westminster Abbey; but Burke had left strict injunctions that his funeral should be private, and he was laid in the little church at Beaconsfield. It was a terrible moment in the history of England and of Europe. An open mutiny had just been quelled in the fleet. There had been signs of disaffection in the army. In Ireland the spirit of revolt was smouldering, and in a few months broke out in the fierce flames of a great rebellion. And it was the year of the political crime of Campo Formio, that sinister pacification in which violence and fraud once more asserted their unveiled ascendancy in Europe. These sombre shadows were falling over the western world, when a life went out, which, notwithstanding some grave aberrations, had made great spaces in human destiny very luminous.

CHAPTER X.

BURKE'S LITERARY CHARACTER.

A STORY is told that in the time when Burke was still at peace with the Dissenters, he visited Priestley, and after seeing his library and his laboratory, and hearing how his host's hours were given to experiment and meditation, he exclaimed that such a life must make him the happiest and most to be envied of men. It must sometimes have occurred to Burke to wonder whether he had made the right choice when he locked away the fragments of his History, and plunged into the torment of party and Parliament. But his interests and aptitudes were too strong and overmastering for him to have been right in doing otherwise. Contact with affairs was an indispensable condition for the full use of his great faculties, in spite of their being less faculties of affairs than of speculation. Public life was the actual field in which to test, and work out, and use with good effect the moral ideas which were Burke's most sincere and genuine interests. And he was able to bring these moral ideas into such effective use because he was so entirely unfettered by the narrowing spirit of formula. No man, for instance, who thought in formulæ would have written the curious passage that I have already referred to, in which he eulogises gin, because "under the pressure of the cares and sor-

rows of our mortal condition, men have at all times and in all countries called in some physical aid to their moral consolation." He valued words at their proper rate, that is to say, he knew that some of the greatest facts in the life and character of man, and in the institutions of society, can find no description and no measurement in words. Public life, as we can easily perceive, with its shibboleths, its exclusive parties, its measurement by conventional standards, its attention to small expediencies before the larger ones, is not a field where such characteristics are likely to make an instant effect.

Though it is not wrong to say of Burke that as an orator he was transcendent, yet in that immediate influence upon his hearers which is commonly supposed to be the mark of oratorical success, all the evidence is that Burke generally failed. We have seen how his speech against Hastings affected Miss Burney, and how the speech on the Nabob of Arcot's debts was judged by Pitt not to be worth answering. Perhaps the greatest that he ever made was that on conciliation with America; the wisest in its temper, the most closely logical in its reasoning, the amplest in appropriate topics, the most generous and conciliatory in the substance of its appeals. Yet Erskine, who was in the House when this was delivered, said that it drove everybody away, including people who, when they came to read it, read it over and over again and could hardly think of anything else. As Moore says rather too floridly, but with truth,—"In vain did Burke's genius put forth its superb plumage, glittering all over with the hundred eyes of fancy—the gait of the bird was heavy and awkward, and its voice seemed rather to scare than attract." Burke's gestures were clumsy; he had sonorous but harsh tones; he never lost a strong Irish

With all his hatred for the book-man in politics, Burke owed much of his own distinction to that generous richness and breadth of judgment which had been ripened in him by literature and his practice in it. Like some other men in our history, he showed that books are a better preparation for statesmanship, than early training in the subordinate posts and among the permanent officials of a public department. There is no copiousness of literary reference in his works, such as over-abounded in civil and ecclesiastical publicists of the seventeenth century. Nor can we truly say that there is much, though there is certainly some, of that tact, which literature is alleged to confer on those who approach it in a just spirit and with the true gift. The influence of literature on Burke lay partly in the direction of emancipation from the mechanical formulæ of practical politics; partly in the association which it engendered, in a powerful understanding like his, between politics and the moral forces of the world, and between political maxims and the old and great sentences of morals; partly in drawing him, even when resting his case on prudence and expediency, to appeal to the widest and highest sympathies; partly, and more than all, in opening his thoughts to the many conditions, possibilities, and "varieties of untried being" in human character and situation, and so giving an incomparable flexibility to his methods of political approach.

This flexibility is not to be found in his manner and composition. That derives its immense power from other sources; from passion, intensity, imagination, size, truth, cogency of logical reason. If any one has imbued himself with that exacting love of delicacy, measure, and taste in expression, which was until our own day a sacred tradition of the French, then he will not like Burke. Those who insist on

charm, on winningness in style, on subtle harmonies and exquisite suggestion, are disappointed in Burke; they even find him stiff and over-coloured. And there are blemishes of this kind. His banter is nearly always ungainly, his wit blunt, as Johnson said of it, and very often unseasonable. We feel that Johnson must have been right in declaring that though Burke was always in search of pleasantries, he never made a good joke in his life. As is usual with a man who has not true humour, Burke is also without true pathos. The thought of wrong or misery moved him less to pity for the victim, than to anger against the cause. Then, there are some gratuitous and unredeemed vulgarities; some images whose barbarity makes us shudder, of creeping ascarides and inexpugnable tape worms. But it is the mere foppery of literature to suffer ourselves to be long detained by specks like these.

The varieties of Burke's literary or rhetorical method are very striking. It is almost incredible that the superb imaginative amplification of the description of Hyder Ali's descent upon the Carnatic should be from the same pen as the grave, simple, unadorned *Address to the King* (1777), where each sentence falls on the ear with the accent of some golden-tongued oracle of the wise gods. His stride is the stride of a giant, from the sentimental beauty of the picture of Marie Antoinette at Versailles, or the red horror of the tale of Debi Sing in Rungpore, to the learning, positiveness, and cool judicial mastery of the *Report on the Lords' Journals* (1794), which Philip Francis, no mean judge, declared on the whole to be the "most eminent and extraordinary" of all his productions. Even in the coolest and dryest of his pieces, there is the mark of greatness, of grasp, of comprehension. In all its varieties Burke's style is noble, earnest, deep-flowing, because his

sentiment was lofty and fervid, and went with sincerity and ardent disciplined travail of judgment. Fox told Francis Horner that Dryden's prose was Burke's great favourite, and that Burke imitated him more than anyone else. We may well believe that he was attracted by Dryden's ease, his copiousness, his gaiety, his manliness of style, but there can hardly have been any conscious attempt at imitation. Their topics were too different. Burke had the style of his subjects, the amplitude, the weightiness, the laboriousness, the sense, the high flight, the grandeur, proper to a man dealing with imperial themes, the freedom of nations, the justice of rulers, the fortunes of great societies, the sacredness of law. Burke will always be read with delight and edification, because in the midst of discussions on the local and the accidental, he scatters apophthegms that take us into the regions of lasting wisdom. In the midst of the torrent of his most strenuous and passionate deliverances, he suddenly rises aloof from his immediate subject, and in all tranquillity reminds us of some permanent relation of things, some enduring truth of human life or society. We do not hear the organ tones of Milton, for faith and freedom had other notes in the seventeenth century. There is none of the complacent and wise-browed sagacity of Bacon, for Burke's were days of eager personal strife and party fire and civil division. We are not exhilarated by the cheerfulness, the polish, the fine manners of Bolingbroke, for Burke had an anxious conscience, and was earnest and intent that the good should triumph. And yet Burke is among the greatest of those who have wrought marvels in the prose of our English tongue.

The influence of Burke on the publicists of the generation after the Revolution was much less considerable than

might have been expected. In Germany, where there has been so much excellent writing about *Staatswissenschaft*, with such poverty and darkness in the wisdom of practical politics, there is a long list of writers who have drawn their inspiration from Burke. In France, publicists of the sentimental school, like Chateaubriand, and the politico-ecclesiastical school, like De Maistre, fashioned a track of their own. In England Burke made a deep mark on contemporary opinion during the last years of his life, and then his influence underwent a certain eclipse. The official Whigs considered him a renegade and a heresiarch, who had committed the deadly sin of breaking up the party, and they never mentioned his name without bitterness. To men like Godwin, the author of *Political Justice*, Burke was as antichrist. Bentham and James Mill thought of him as a declaimer who lived upon applause, and who, as one of them says, was for protecting everything old, not because it was good but because it existed. In one quarter only did he exert a profound influence. His maxim that men might employ their sagacity in discovering the latent wisdom which underlies general prejudices and old institutions, instead of exploding them, inspired Coleridge, as I have already said; and the Coleridgian school are Burke's direct descendants, whenever they deal with the significance and the relations of Church and State. But they connected these views so closely with their views in metaphysics and theology, that the association with Burke was effectually disguised.

The only English writer of that age whom we can name along with Burke in the literature of enduring power, is Wordsworth, that great representative in another and a higher field, and with many rare elements added that were all his own, of those harmonizing and concilia-

tory forces and ideas that make man's destiny easier to him, through piety in its oldest and best sense; through reverence for the past, for duty, for institutions. He was born in the year of the *Present Discontents* (1770), and when Burke wrote the *Reflections*, Wordsworth was standing, with France "on the top of golden hours," listening with delight among the ruins of the Bastille, or on the banks of the Loire, to "the homeless sound of joy that was in the sky." When France lost faith and freedom, and Napoleon had built his throne on their grave, he began to see those strong elements which for Burke had all his life been the true and fast foundation of the social world. Wide as is the difference between an oratorical and a declamatory mind like Burke's, and the least oratorical of all poets, yet, under this difference of form and temper, there is a striking likeness in spirit. There was the same energetic feeling about moral ideas, the same frame of counsel and prudence, the same love for the slowness of time, the same slight account held of mere intellectual knowledge, and even the same ruling sympathy with that side of the character of Englishmen which Burke exulted in, as '*their awe of kings and reverence for priests*,' '*their sullen resistance of innovation*,' '*their unalterable perseverance in the wisdom of prejudice*.'

The conservative movement in England ran on for many years in the ecclesiastical channel, rather than among questions where Burke's writings might have been brought to bear. On the political side the most active minds, both in practice and theory, worked out the principles of liberalism, and they did so on a plan and by methods from which Burke's utilitarian liberalism and his historic conservatism were equally remote. There are many signs around us that this epoch is for the moment at an end.

The historic method, fitting in with certain dominant conceptions in the region of natural science, is bringing men round to a way of looking at society for which Burke's maxims are exactly suited; and it seems probable that he will be more frequently and more seriously referred to within the next twenty years than he has been within the whole of the last eighty.

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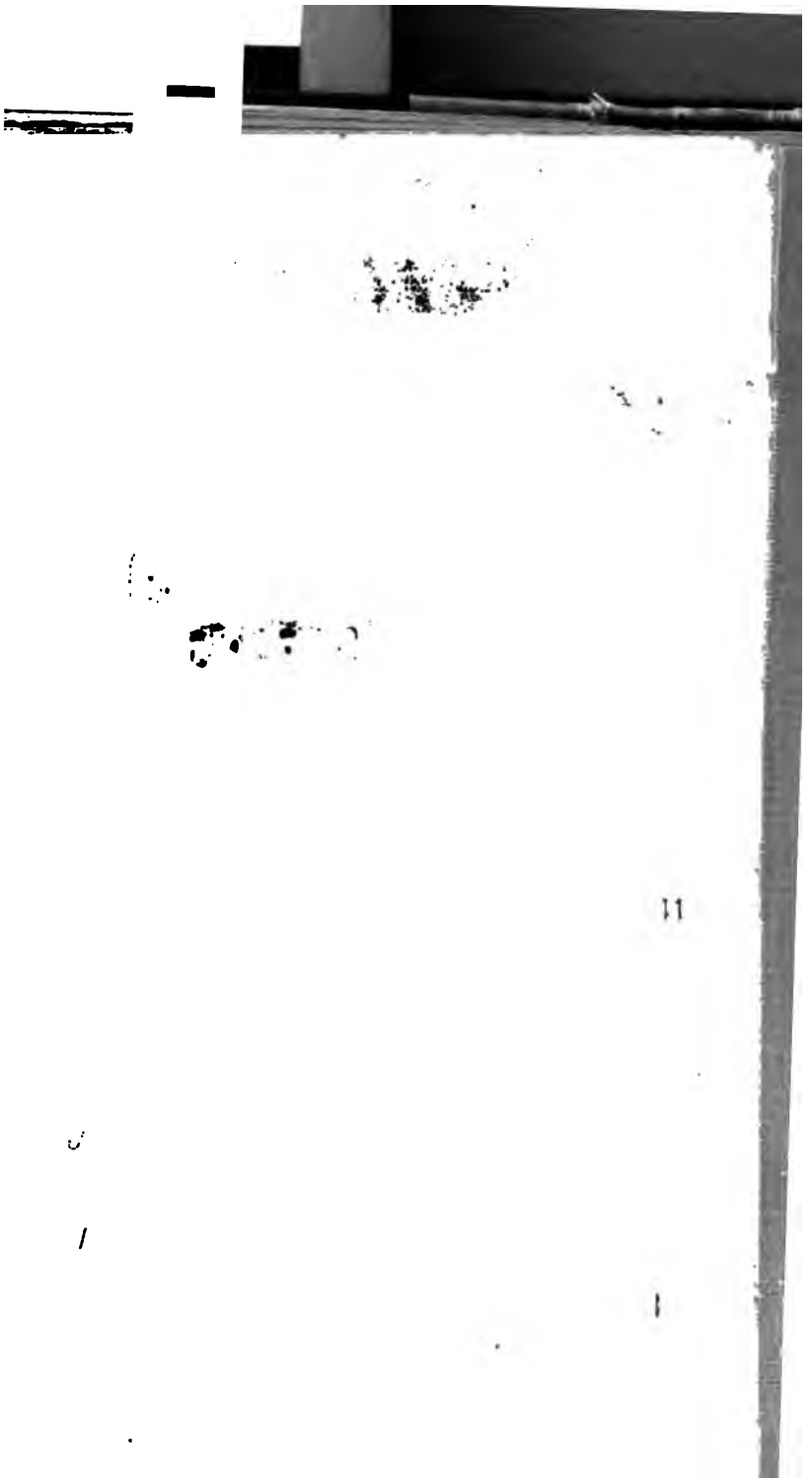
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